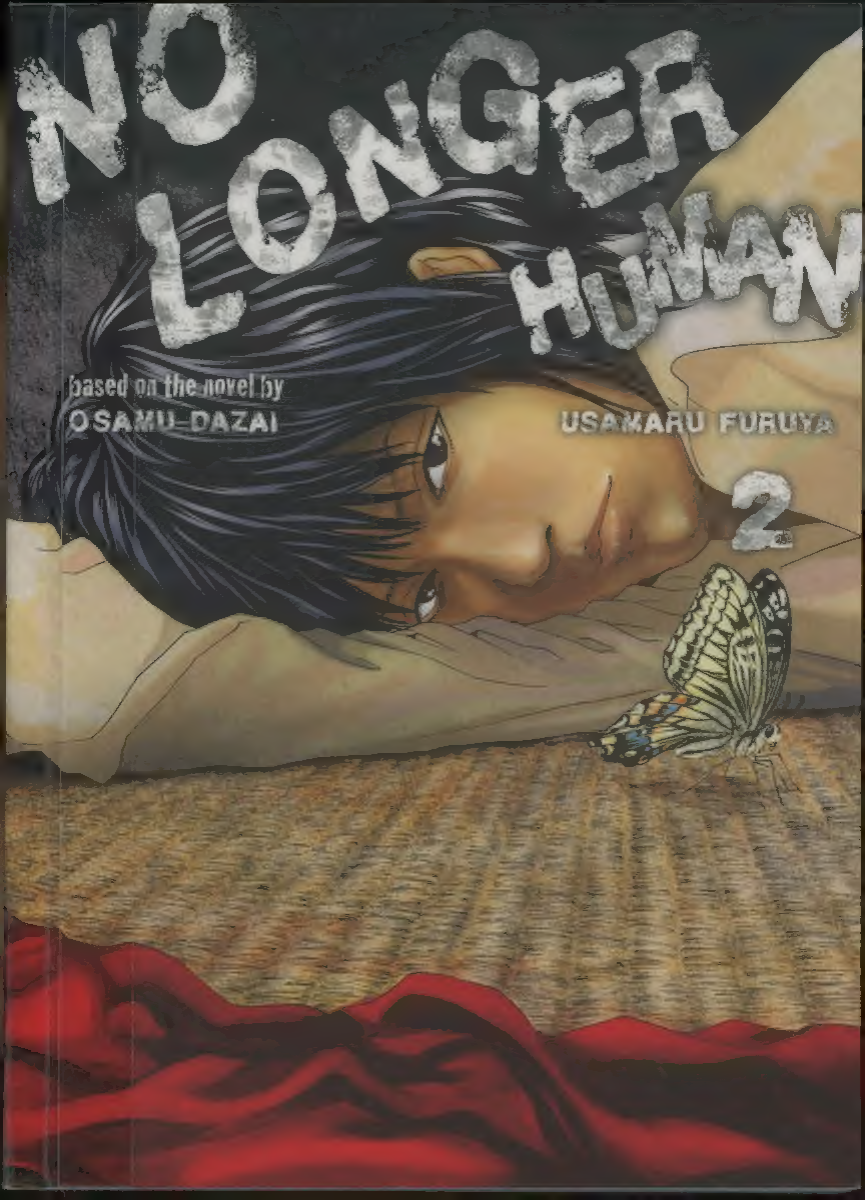
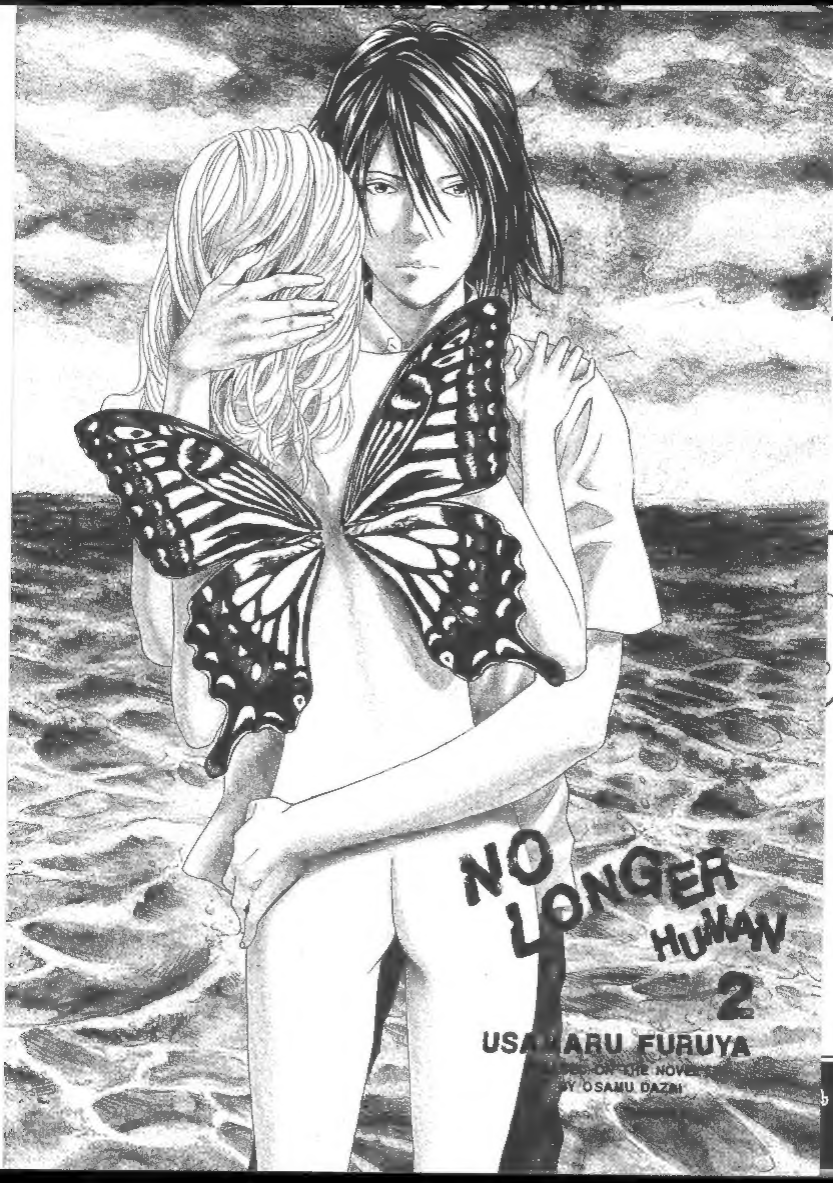

NO LONGER HUMAN
based on the novel by
OSAMU DAZAI
USAMARU FURUYA
2

US $10.95 / $11.95 CAN
ISBN 978-1-935654-22-3
51095>
9 781935 654223
PUBLISHED BY VERTICAL, INC., NEW YORK
WWW.VERTICOMICS.COM
AGES 16+

Published not long after the nation's defeat in World War II, the searing novel by Osamu Dazai, Japan's Dostoevsky, shows no sign of losing hold of new audiences. In this comics adaptation by the enfant terrible of manga, the prewar setting of the semi-autobiographical work is traded for the brave new world of the aught years. Find out how self-described clown Yozo Oba awakens to his dark genius in the series' middle installment.


NO LONGER HUMAN
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USAHARU FURUYA
BASED ON THE NOVEL
BY OSAMU DAZAI

NO LONGER HUMAN

VOLUME 2

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SUICIDE, ASSISTED 003

SIXTH ENTRY
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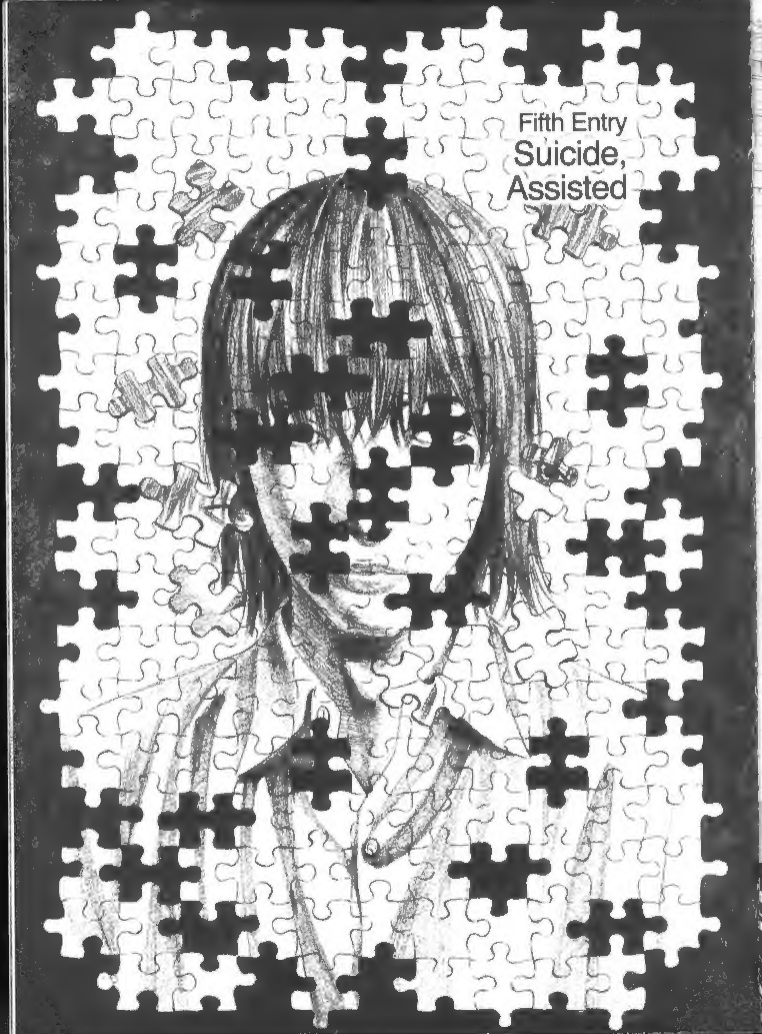
SEVENTH ENTRY
A KEPT MAN 085

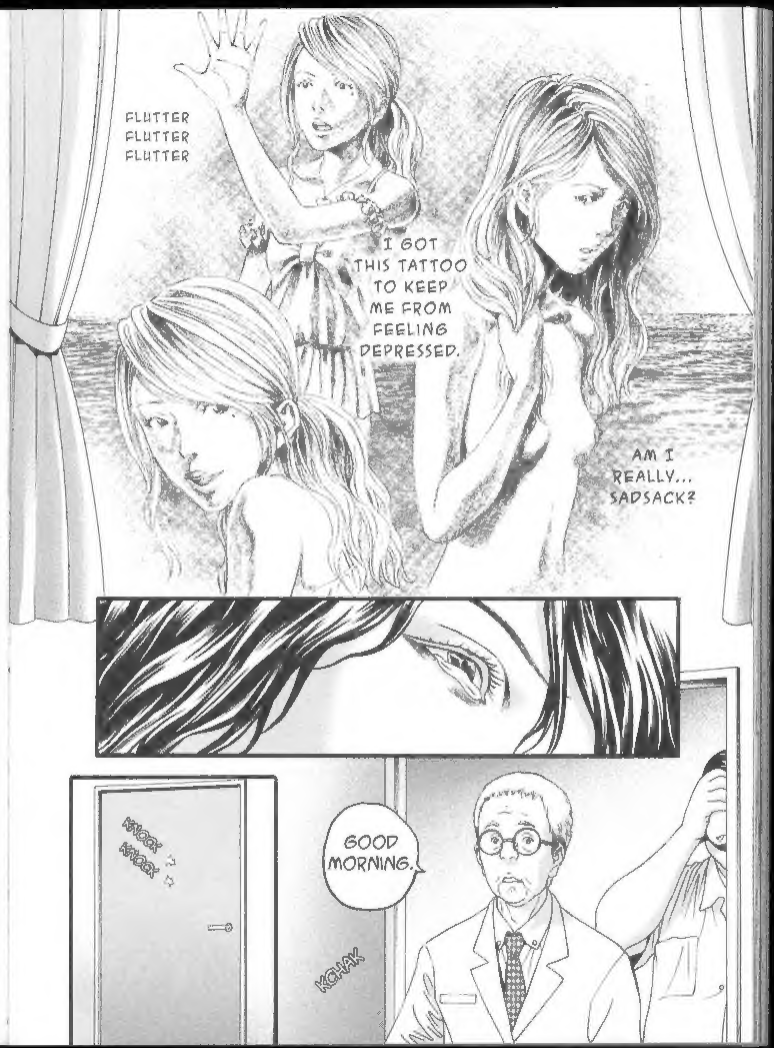
EIGHTH ENTRY
PARADISE 157

CLACK
SURFING THE WEB IN SEARCH OF MATERIAL FOR MY NEXT MANGA STORY, I HAD FOUND A GUY'S DIARY.
HE HAD ATTEMPTED SUICIDE WITH A CABARET HOSTESS.
The woman died. I, alone, was saved.
IT'S GOTTA BE FAKE ...
I SHOULD CALL IT QUITS FOR THE NIGHT.
SLEEP
SHUT DOWN
.....
JUST A LITTLE MORE...
CLICK
CLICK
I HAD HALF-HEARTEDLY STARTED READING THIS GUY YOZO OBA'S DIARY...
BUT NOW I FOUND I JUST COULDN'T LEAVE IT UNFINISHED.


Fifth Entry
Suicide, Assisted

IT WON'T DO FOR YOU TO LEAVE THIS MUCH.
EAT PROPERLY, OR YOU WON'T GET BETTER.
DO YOU UNDER-STAND?
ALL RIGHT, I'LL BE BACK IN HALF AN HOUR, THEN.
SLAM

YOU KNOW OBA IN ROOM 304...
YEAH, THE GOOD-LOOKING GUY.
WE CONTACTED HIS FAMILY BUT NO ONE'S COMING.
ALL THEY DID WAS WIRE MONEY.
NEITHER HIS PARENTS NOR HIS SIBLINGS?
BUT HE'S SO YOUNG TO HAVE ATTEMPTED A DOUBLE SUICIDE...


FLUTTER FLUTTER FLUTTER
I GOT THIS TATTOO TO KEEP ME FROM FEELING DEPRESSED.
AM I REALLY... SADSACK?
KNOCK KNOCK
GOOD MORNING.
KCHAK

SOMEONE FROM THE POLICE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE A WORD WITH YOU.
THAT'S ME.
THANKS.
OH-HO
WHAT A HAND-SOME FELLOW!
A FACE A GIRL WOULD DIE WITH!
I'LL LEAVE YOU NOW.
BOW
SHAME ON THE WOMAN WHO GAVE BIRTH TO SUCH A GOOD-LOOKING KID!
LET'S GET RIGHT DOWN TO IT.
CLICK
WHAT WAS YOUR RELA-TIONSHIP WITH MISS IZUMIYA?
PEAK
IZU... MIYA...?
WHO IS THAT?
HUH?
YOU TRIED TO DIE WITH HER NOT KNOWING HER NAME?!
DID YOU MEET AT ONE OF 'EM SUICIDE SITES?
NO...
I SHARED WITH HIM MY LIMITED MEMORIES OF AGEHA...
THEN... MET HER...
LET ME STAY WITH HER THAT NIGHT
SOME-TIME LATER ...
IT ONLY TOOK ABOUT 15 MINUTES TO TELL THE WHOLE STORY.

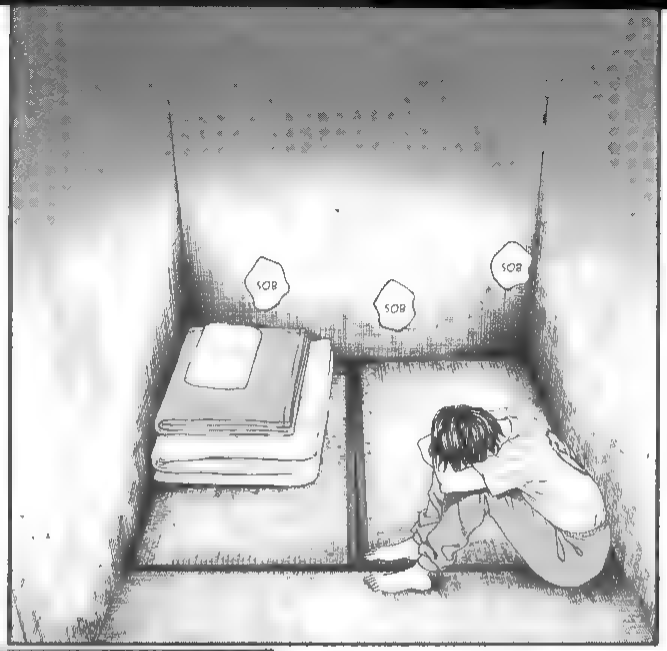
SO...
DIDJA DO HER THAT NIGHT?
TWICE?
NO CONTRA-CEPTION? OH-HO.
SO WAS IT GOOD? HUH?
I DON'T REALLY REMEMBER BUT...
I THINK IT WAS GOOD.
IT MUST HAVE BEEN GOOD IF YOU DID IT TWICE!
SO YOU, A MINOR, GOT A HOSTESS TO SLEEP WITH YOU THE FIRST NIGHT!
THE DETECTIVE WAS VERY PERSISTENT IN HIS QUESTIONS ABOUT SEX.
SO THEN...
DID YOU DO IT AT THE BEACH TOO?
THEY SERVED NO PURPOSE THAT WASN'T LECHEROUS, BUT I TOLD HIM EVERYTHING.
I WAS TRYING TO DIE ANYWAY.
I DON'T CARE IF I GET THE DEATH PENALTY.

YOU MIGHT WANT TO THINK AGAIN!
THE GIRL'S PARENTS...
AND HER HUSBAND IN JAIL...
ARE PISSED AT YOU!
AS SOON AS THE DOCTOR AUTHORIZES IT...
WE'LL TAKE YOU DOWN TO THE STATION ON CHARGES OF ASSISTING SUICIDE.
ASSISTING...
SUICIDE?

SEVERAL DAYS LATER
I WAS HELD IN CUSTODY AT THE POLICE STATION.
FROM THE START, YOU NEVER REALLY WANTED TO DIE.
DID YOU?
TELL ME I'M RIGHT.
JAIL
NO, SIR...
I DID WANT TO DIE...

VROOMM
WHAT'RE YOU LOOKIN' AT?
WHO YA THINK YA ARE?
SETTLE DOWN.

AT THE PROSECUTOR'S
I DON'T GET YOUR STORY.
YOU RESOLVED TO DIE JUST LIKE THAT, AND SHE CONSENTED.
PUBLIC PROSECUTOR JIN NOJIMA
TAP TAP
YES, SIR.
BUT YOU HAD BORROWED 50,000 YEN FROM HER.
WHAT'S MORE, THE NIGHT BEFORE, SHE PAID THE DRINKING TAB FOR YOU AND YOUR FRIEND MASAO HORIKI.
YOU KILLED HER TO GET OUT OF PAYING YOUR DEBT.
IS THAT NOT SO?
NO, SIR...



A SMEAR ON THE WALL LOOKED LIKE A SWALLOWTAIL BUTTERFLY.

WHEN ALONE, I JUST SNIVELLED.

YOU ONLY WENT TO THAT CLUB TWICE...
AND YET, YOU SAY YOU LOVED HER?
YES, SIR...
IT'S JUST MY OPINION, BUT THAT'S NOT LOVE.
THAT'S CALLED LUST.
LUST...?
THOUGH YOU'RE A MINOR, THE FACT REMAINS THAT SOMEBODY IS DEAD.
HARD TO SAY MORE AT THIS POINT
PUBLIC PROSECUTOR JIN NOJIMA
WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN

I'LL PROBABLY BE FOUND GUILTY AND GIVEN A SENTENCE.
I'LL BE SUED AND SPEND THE REST OF MY LIFE PAYING REPARATIONS TO HER FAMILY.
MAKING AMENDS TO HER
FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE,
HUH?
VROOMM
THEN I SHOULD GET A REAL JOB.
SO I CAN MAKE IT UP TO AGEHA

THE THOUGHT ODDLY ENERGIZED ME.
A REASON FOR LIVING... I FELT LIKE I HAD ONE NOW.
FLUTTER FLUTTER FLUTTER
FLUTTER FLUTTER FLUTTER

TWELVE DAYS AFTER I WAS ARRESTED... MY DETENTION WAS EXTENDED AND I WAS HELD IN JAIL FOR ANOTHER TEN DAYS.
YOU...
LOOK LIVELIER THAN BEFORE.
AFTER THAT THE MATTER WAS SENT TO FAMILY COURT, AND I AWAITED THE START OF MY JUVENILE TRIAL.
IT TAKES A VILLAGE
THEN ONE DAY, I WAS SUMMONED BY THE DETECTIVE IN CHARGE AGAIN.
FOR SOME REASON THE VICTIM'S FAMILY HAS EXPRESSED A DESIRE THAT THE DEFENDANT BE FORGIVEN.
THE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR IS ALSO REQUESTING LENIENCY FROM THE FAMILY COURT.
WHAT...?

THAT MEANS YOU'RE FREE!
THE TRIAL HAS BEEN CAN-CELED!
WOULDN'T YOU KNOW IT?!
HUH?
SLAM
WITHOUT MY KNOWLEDGE, THE ANTIQUES DEALER SHIBUTA, OR "FLOUNDER," WHO HAD WORKED AS A SORT OF MINION TO MY FATHER, HAD BEEN APPOINTED AS MY GUARANTOR.
I so wanted to see that enemy of the state...
MURATA
THE TRIAL CANCELED
SO I'M NOT CHARGED WITH A CRIME?
FLOUNDER
HA HA, SUCH A STRONG BOY!
HE USED TO PLAY WITH ME ALL THE TIME WHEN I WAS LITTLE
THAT WAS SO LONG AGO
YOU'RE HIS GUARAN-TOR, MR. SHIBUTA, RIGHT?
YES, I AM
WAIT ...
F--
FLOUNDER ?!
FLOUNDER DIDN'T SAY A WORD ON THE WAY BACK TO TOKYO FROM KAMAKURA.

COME ON IN.
MASATO
WERE YOU STILL UP?
PAPA?
WHO'S THAT?
THIS ONE'S GOING TO BE STAYING WITH US.
HE'S SCUM.
.....
HERE'S YOUR ROOM.
MORE LIKE A STORAGE
SLAP

IT'S WEIRD
THIS SENSE OF THINGS JUST PUTTERING ON
AGEHA DIED
WHY IS HER FAMILY FORGIVING ME?

KLINK
CHOMP
SLURP
MASATO, LEAVE THE DISHES FOR LATER.
GO UPSTAIRS.
OKAY

SLAM
HEY, WHAT IS IT, FLOUNDER?
STOP CALLING ME THAT.
MIND YOU, YOU'RE A SPONGER.
... .
OKAY.
A CANCELED TRIAL IS PROBABLY THE SAME AS CHARGES BEING DROPPED.
I DOUBT YOU'LL HAVE A CRIMINAL RECORD.
IF YOU WERE TO TURN YOURSELF AROUND...
WITH STEADY DEDICATION, YOU COULD REHABILITATE YOURSELF.
HOW ABOUT IT?
WHAT, "LIKE HOW?"
WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO WITH YOURSELF?
WELL ...
LIKE HOW?
DO YOU MEAN I OUGHT TO GET A JOB?
I'M ASKING HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT IT.

HOW I FEEL..
SCRATCH SCRATCH
MY FEELINGS...
.....
A PAINTER,
MAYBE ?
AH?
I'D LIKE TO BE
A PAINTER, I GUESS.
NOT SOME STUPID PIPE DREAM!
WE'RE TALKING ABOUT YOUR IMMEDIATE FUTURE.
BUT ..
IF I WERE TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL, WHERE'D I FIND THE MONEY?
THE ISSUE HERE ISN'T MONEY
BUT WHAT'S IN YOUR HEART!
MY HEART ?
NOT MONEY?
YES.
YOUR HEART.
NOT MONEY.
MY HEART ?
IS THAT R.GHT
I SEE HOW IT IS
RIPPLE
TAKE SOME TIME TO THINK ABOUT IT.
HA HA!
SLAP
A PALPER DARES TO SPEAK OF THE HEART!

IT'S MONEY, ISN'T IT?
MONEY!
THAT'S WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT, ISN'T IT?!
MY PARENTS MUST BE SENDING MONEY HERE!
GNASH
WHY WOULD AGEHA'S FAMILY FORGIVE ME?
THEY MUST HAVE BEEN PAID A HUGE SETTLEMENT!!
COME TO THINK OF IT, WHY WOULD I EVER NOT BE CHARGED?!
COULD IT REALLY BE THAT.
NO... IT HAS TO BE..
FATHER'S COMPANY IS POLITICALLY WELL-CONNECTED!!
NO DOUBT HE'D HUSH OVER A SCANDAL IN THE FAMILY!!
MONEY
MONEY
MONEY AGAIN!!
HE DOESN'T ONCE SIT ME IN JAIL
BUT CONTROLS ME WITH MONEY!!
SKRCH
SKRCH

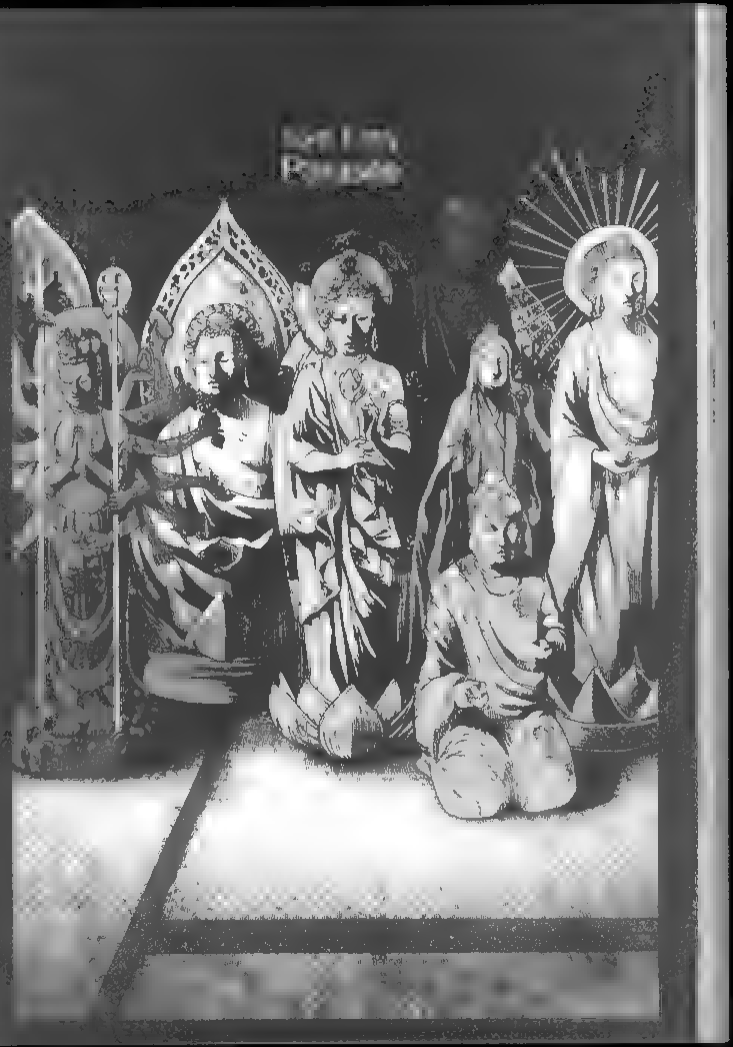
SHIT!
SHIT!
SHIT!
SKRCH
SKRCH
IF I..
HAD DIED THEN...
I THOLGHT I'D BE FREE..
AGEHA, YOU CHEAT!!
FLYING AWAY BY YOURSELF...
GRIP
I'LL COME TO YOU...
OVER TO YOUR SIDE, AGEHA...
GASP
GASP
GASP
GASP
PLGH PLGH
GULP

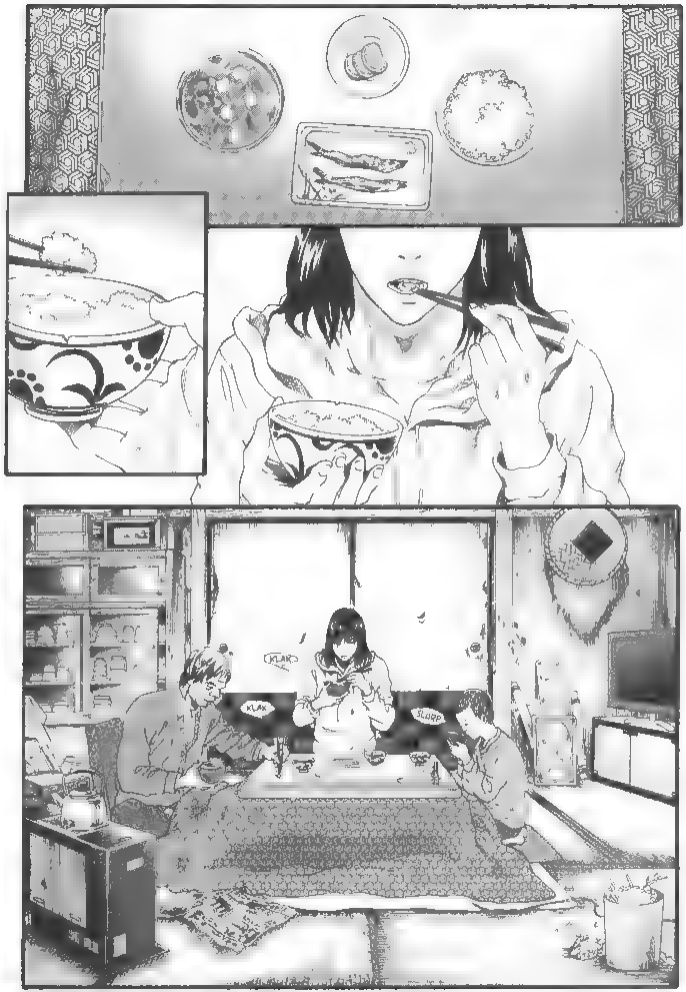
.....
I DON'T WANT TO DIE...
I CAN'T EVEN DIE...
AND YET I DON'T WANT TO LIVE...
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO?!
HAVEN'T I HAD ENOUGH?
DO I NEED TO SUFFER THE WORLD AND FEAR HUMANS MORE...
BEFORE I CAN MUSTER THE COURAGE TO DIE?

YOU CREEPY
SCUM!
I SUFFER...
WHEREVER I GO, I SUFFOCATE...

SINCE ARRIVING AT THE HOUSE, I'D EVEN LOST THE WILL TO CLOWN, WALLOWING IN THE CONTEMPT OF FLOUNDER AND THE LITTLE SCAMP. FLOUNDER SEEMED LOATH TO ENGAGE IN ANY LONG CHATS WITH ME, AND FOR MY PART, I HAD NO DESIRE TO SEEK HIM OUT OR APPEAL TO HIM. I WAS BEING NOTHING MORE THAN AN IDIOT-FACED SPONGER.

自分がこの家へ来てからは、
道化を演ずる場合ひさへ無く、
ただもうヒラメと小僧の軽蔑の中に身を横たへ、
ヒラメのはうでもまた、
自分と打ち解けた長談をするのを
避けてゐる様子でしたし、
自分もそのヒラメを追ひかけて、
何かを訊へる気などは起らず、
ほとんど自分は、
腰抜けづらの置物になり切つてゐたのです。




KLAK
KLAK
SLURP

SLURRPP
CHOMP
THIS TASTES TERRIBLE..
HOW DO YOU COOK RICE THAT TASTES THIS BAD?
YOU MUSTN'T LEAVE ANY.
OKAY.
SMILE
IT'S BEEN THREE MONTHS SINCE I'VE COME TO THIS HOUSE.

STAY IN THIS HOUSE!
OKAY.
JUST DON'T LEAVE.
SLAP
FLOUNDER THINKS I'M GOING TO KILL MYSELF
CHASING AFTER MY WOMAN...

I DON'T HAVE THE WILL TO KILL MYSELF
I JUST GIVE A FORCED SMILE AND
EAT, SHIT, AND SLEEP
THAT'S ALL I CAN MANAGE
WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT?
DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT

THE BUDDHAS GLARING AT ME, I WHILED AWAY THE DAYS READING FLOUNDER'S OLD MAGAZINES...
I'LL GO TO SCHOOL.
I KNOW MY FAMILY IS SENDING MONEY TO FLOUNDER
BUT RELYING ON MY PARENTS ANY MORE WAS WORSE THAN
Kibuta Antiques
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
HERE IT IS.
ORIENT
¥250,000 A MONTH, TOO!!
THOSE ARE TRANSFERS FROM FATHER'S COMPANY!

W TH THAT MUCH MONEY
HE COULD AT LEAST SERVE BETTER FOOD
BRMMM
MASATO!
MASATO!
FLOUNDER PURCHASED A CAR THAT DIDN'T SUIT HIM.
MY FOOD ...
KEEP AN EYE ON HIM, MAKE SURE HE DOESN'T RUN AWAY.
UH-HUH

BOW
HMPH
FLOUNDER MAINTAINED HIS GRUFF AIRS, NEVER RETURNING MY FORCED SMILES.
BRMMM
THE FACT THAT PEOPLE COULD

FLUTTER FLUTTER FLUTTER
FLUTTER FLUTTER
...
I DON'T EVEN REMEMBER AGEHA'S FACE ANYMORE. .
AND BY THEN...
I COULDN'T RECALL MY AFFECTION FOR HER, EITHER.

THUS, BREATHING BUT DEAD...
I'D SPENT HALF A YEAR AT THAT HOUSE.
VOCA-TIONAL 2
YOU'LL ATTEND A VOCATIONAL SCHOOL?
YES.
I WANT TO DRAW, AFTER ALL.
YOU'RE SERIOUS?
YOU REALLY MEAN TO REHABILITATE YOURSELF?
YES.
AND I DON'T WANT TO BE A BURDEN ON YOU

I SEE
IF THAT'S WHAT YOU'VE DECIDED, THEN GO AHEAD
THANK YOU
I'LL GO VISIT SCHOOLS
THEY'RE UNDER-ENROLLED, SO I CAN EASILY GET IN.
OF COURSE, THESE WERE ALL LIES.
HERE'S TRAIN FARE.
UM..
NOWADAYS THEY ALL CHARGE A FEE FOR BROCHURES.
HOW MUCH?
ABOUT ¥3,000
DAMN, THAT'S EXPENSIVE!
CAN YOU BE HOME BY 5 O'CLOCK?
YES.
I'M OFF.
HOLD UP A MINUTE!
SHOW ME WHAT'S INSIDE YOUR BAG.
.....
WHY DO YOU HAVE YOUR LAPTOP?
NOWADAYS THEY USUALLY INSTALL PDF FILES OF THE BROCHURES ON YOUR PC.
OH, YEAH?
THAT WAS CLOSE.
MARL-BORO.
LAKE
I WANTED TO SMOKE... I WANTED TO DRINK... THE CRAPPY FOOD WAS KILLING ME...
I RAN AWAY FOR THOSE REASONS.
WAIT, MAKE IT MENTHOL.
FLICK
MY HEART IS BEATING A MILE A MINUTE.

YOSHINOYA
24 HOURS
EEL RICE BOWL
YOSHINOYA YOSHINOYA
GOBBLE GOBBLE
BEEN SO LONG SINCE I HAD A DECENT MEAL!
1000
2,320 YEN
WHAT'S LEFT?
.....

PACHINKO MIKAMI
I'VE GOT NO CHOICE BUT TO TRY TO BOOST THIS.
SIGH
¥500 LEFT...

MASAO HORIKI
2-1 DAIAKA
1962-
COME BY MY HOUSE IF YOU EVER NEED TO
AT A TIME LIKE THIS
HE'S THE ONLY GUY I CAN RELY ON
HORIKI'S A YEAR OLDER THAN I AM
MAYBE HE'S MADE IT INTO SOME Y-YEAR ART SCHOO...
HORIKI GREEN GROCERY
TEL 4325
THIS IS IT
HELLO.
HOW MAY I HELP YOU?
I'M A FRIEND OF MASAO'S.
MY NAME IS OBA
OBA...?
HEY, MASAO! SOMEONE NAMED OBA IS HERE TO SEE YOU.
OBA?
SEND HIM UP!

SORRY TO BOTHER YOU.
BOW
CREAK
CRRK
IS IT HIM?
THE DOUBLE SUICIDE KID?
RIGHT— MASAO SAID HIS NAME WAS OBA
HE SURE IS HANDSOME ENOUGH FOR IT.
CREAK
.....
CREAK
GLANCE
HEY
H-HEY...
IT'S BEEN A WHILE...
YOU IDIOT!
I STOOD UP FOR YOU.
YOU SHOULD THANK ME.
THE COPS INTERROGATED ME LIKE HELL.
SORRY...

YOU'VE GOT TO STOP ACTING SO STUPID.
A DEAD-LINE?
I'M BUSY WORKING ON A DEADLINE TODAY.
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
SKRIK
SKRIK
SO HE'S DOING ILLUSTRATIONS
UM..
WANT SOME SWEET BEAN SOUP?
OH...
PLEASE DON'T GO TO ANY TROUBLE!
HERE YOU ARE.
THANK YOU.
PLEASE ENJOY.
STARE
SLURP
GLUG
GLUG
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
HOR.K.
..
HE'S BEGUN WORKING.
SKRIK
SKRIK
SKRIK
SKRIK
SKRIK
SKRIK
SKRIK
SKRIK
SKRIK
SKRIK
BZZZ

WHAT DID I COME HERE FOR?
WHAT WAS I HOPING FOR?
DID I THINK HE WOULD LET ME STAY WITH HIM?
BZZZT

OH, GO ON UPSTAIRS.
SORRY TO BOTHER YOU.
CREAK
CREAK
HELLO
HARD AT WORK?
OH, HI.
I'M ALMOST DONE.
THEN I'LL JUST WAIT...

HELLO
OH
HELLO
HE'S AN ACQUAINTANCE OF MINE.
AN ACQUAINTANCE, HUH?
I'M SHIZUKO TANAKA OF TAISHU BUNGEI
I'M YOZO OBA.
BE CAREFUL.
AS IF!
HE'LL GET YOU PREGNANT IF YOU LOOK AT HER EYE
GREEN GROCERY
TEL 43
AND RECEIVED!
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF REALLY LIKES YOUR WORK.
HE WANTS YOU TO ILLUSTRATE HAJIME OTSUDA'S FORTHCOMING SERIAL.
REALLY? I'D LOVE TO!
I'LL DO MY BEST.
HEY! TELEPHONE.
HELLO?
IT'S NOT FOR YOU, STUPID!
I'D LIKE TO SPEAK TO YOZO OBA.
HUH?
WHO, ME?
UH-HUH.

GIVE ME A BREAK RUNNING AWAY...
!
FLOUN-DER?!
GLANCE
GLANCE
YO?O?
!
MASATO!
GREEN GROCERY
TEL 4325-23
HELLO?
NO.. I HAVEN'T RUN AWAY OR ANYTHING.
I JUST SUDDENLY FELT LIKE SEEING A FRIEND
I'LL BE HOME SOON
PIP
. . . . . .
YOU'VE RUN AWAY?
YOU THOUGHT YOU'D CRASH HERE?
YOU'VE GOT TO CHANGE YOUR WAYS
AND GET IT TOGETHER!
I'VE ANNOYED YOU AGAIN.
SORRY...
SORRY TO BOTHER YOU
WHAT, YOU'RE LEAVING ALREADY?
COME BACK AGAIN!
ARE YOU JOKING?!
DON'T DRAG MASAO INTO HIS PROBLEMS!

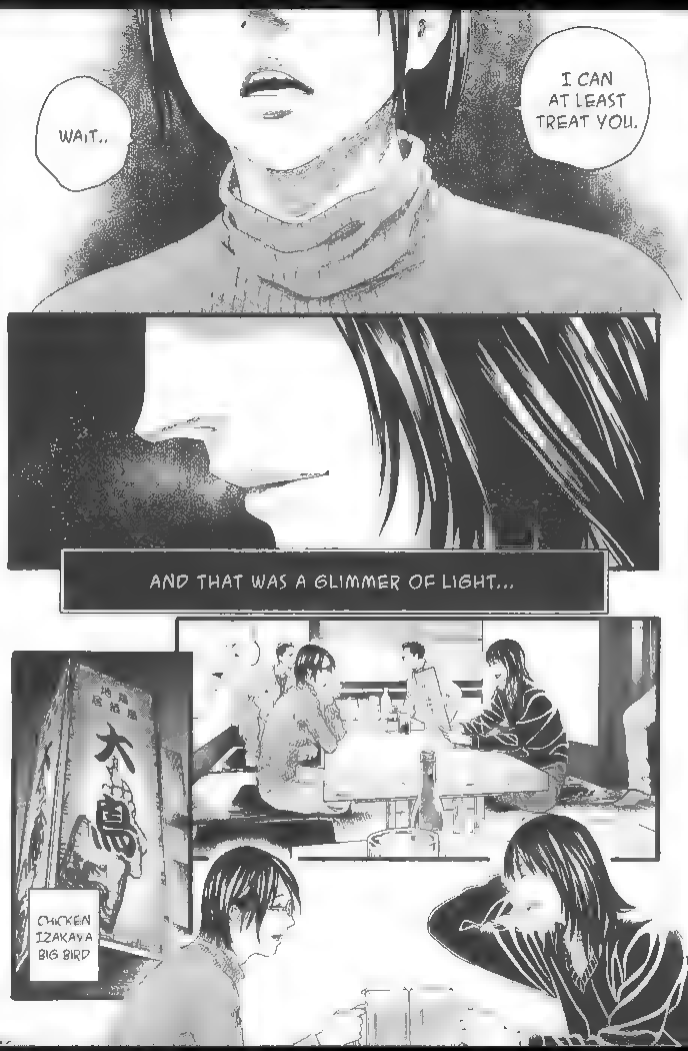
生活を守り抜く
LET'S GO HOME.
GRAB
.....
WHAT'S THE DEAL
WITH H.M?
WELL, HE...
TRIED TO KILL HIM-SELF AND ...
CLANG

WHANG
GONNA
PA
PAPA

YAY, IT'S SNOWING!
I'M COLD
SO COLD ..
NONE ...
THERE'S NOWHERE I COULD LIVE...
NOWHERE AT ALL...

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT
SECOND SECTION
SHIZUKO TANAK
TAISHU BUNGEISH
0042 UDAGA
03 37
TAISHU BUNGEI CO., LTD
OH, MY!
BOW
UM.
I HAVE MY REASONS
BUT IF THERE'S ANY PART-TIME JOB I COULD TAKE HERE
PLEASE CONSIDER ME.

HORIKI TOLD ME THOSE REASONS.
BUT I'M SORRY.
WITH THIS RECESSION... THINGS ARE VERY TIGHT HERE TOO
I UNDER-STAND.
I'M SORRY TO HAVE BOTHERED YOU
THANKS AGAIN FOR YOUR TIME
...
STEP
STEP
STEP
STEP
SHE'S LOOKING AT ME
STEP
STEP
STEP
PLEASE...
STEP
PLEASE...!
STEP


WAIT..
I CAN AT LEAST TREAT YOU.
AND THAT WAS A GLIMMER OF LIGHT...
CHICKEN IZAKAYA BIG BIRD

I PUT ON MY SMILING-BEST CLOWN PERFORMANCE.
I REELED THE SLIM THREAD IN, LITTLE BY LITTLE, SO IT WOULDN'T SNAP...
YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH A LOT, HAVEN'T YOU,
TO BE SO THOUGHT-FUL AT YOUR AGE, YOU POOR THING
OH, NO, NOT ME
ONE STEP MORE...

NO...
GRAB
I AM A GENIUS...
PARASITE ON WOMEN.
SWKP

I'VE NO WAY LEFT
TO LIVE...

I HAD NO ONE TO TURN TO.
THERE WAS NOWHERE I COULD GO.
HORIKI.

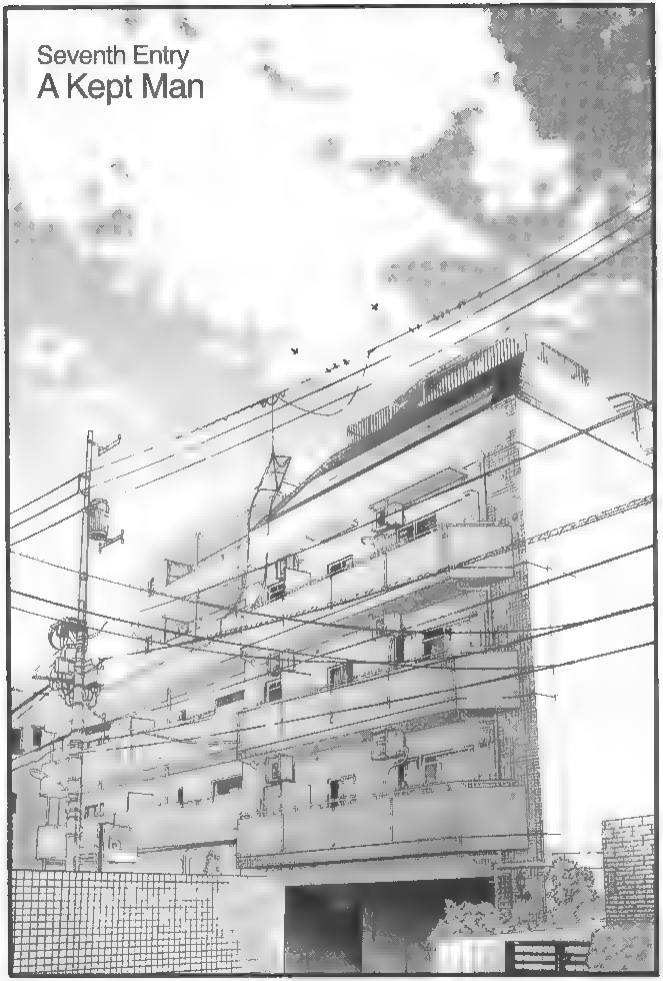
AS I REALIZED THAT A GUY LIKE HORIKI WAS MY ONLY SUCCOR IN THIS WHOLE WORLD, I WAS OVERCOME WITH A TERRIBLE SENSATION THAT CHILLED MY VERY SPINE.

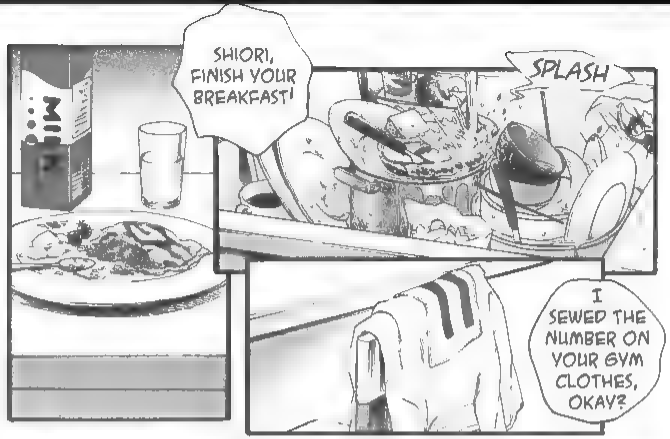
誰とも、附き合いが無い。
どこへも、出掛けない。
堀木。

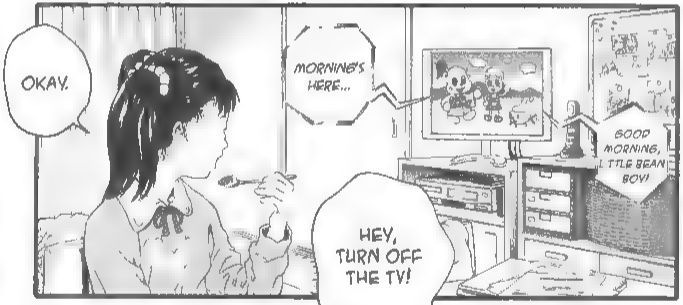
自分にとって、
この世の中でたった一つの頼みの綱に、
あの堀木なのか、と思い知った、
何か背筋の寒くなるような
凄じい気配に襲われました。

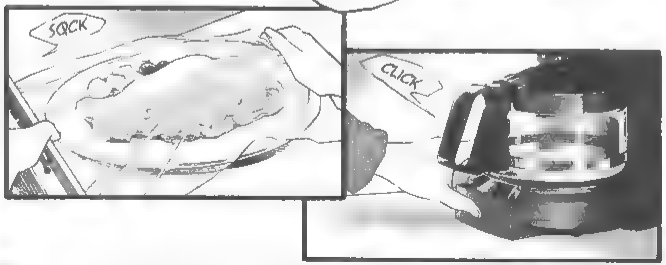
Seventh Entry

A Kept Man




SHIORI, FINISH YOUR BREAKFAST!
SPLASH
I SEWED THE NUMBER ON YOUR GYM CLOTHES, OKAY?


OKAY.
MORNING'S HERE...
GOOD MORNING, LITTLE BEAN BOY!
HEY, TURN OFF THE TV!


SOCK
CLICK

LET'S GET GOING.
OKAY.
ZZZ
ZZZ

HEY, YOZO...
THERE'S A FRIED RICE OMELET FOR YOU TO MICRO-WAVE.
DRIP DRIP
I SET SOME COFFEE FOR YOU AS WELL
WE'RE OFF.
IF IT'S NOT ENOUGH, USE THIS.

HRM
THANKS...
I'LL BE RIGHT THERE, SHIORI. WAIT FOR ME DOWNSTAIRS.
OKAY
TUNK
YOZO...
KISS ME.
HM?
MM
MM
TONIGHT WE'LL HAVE YUMMY CRAB AND RICE SOUP!
LOOK FORWARD TO IT.
LIH-H..H
HAVE A GOOD DAY.

click
click
HEY, HAVE YOU GAINED A LITTLE WEIGHT?
NOOO
A SIXTEEN-YEAR-OLD BOY HAS MURDERED HIS FATHER WITH AN AXE IN A TRAGIC CASE
click
click
KLIK

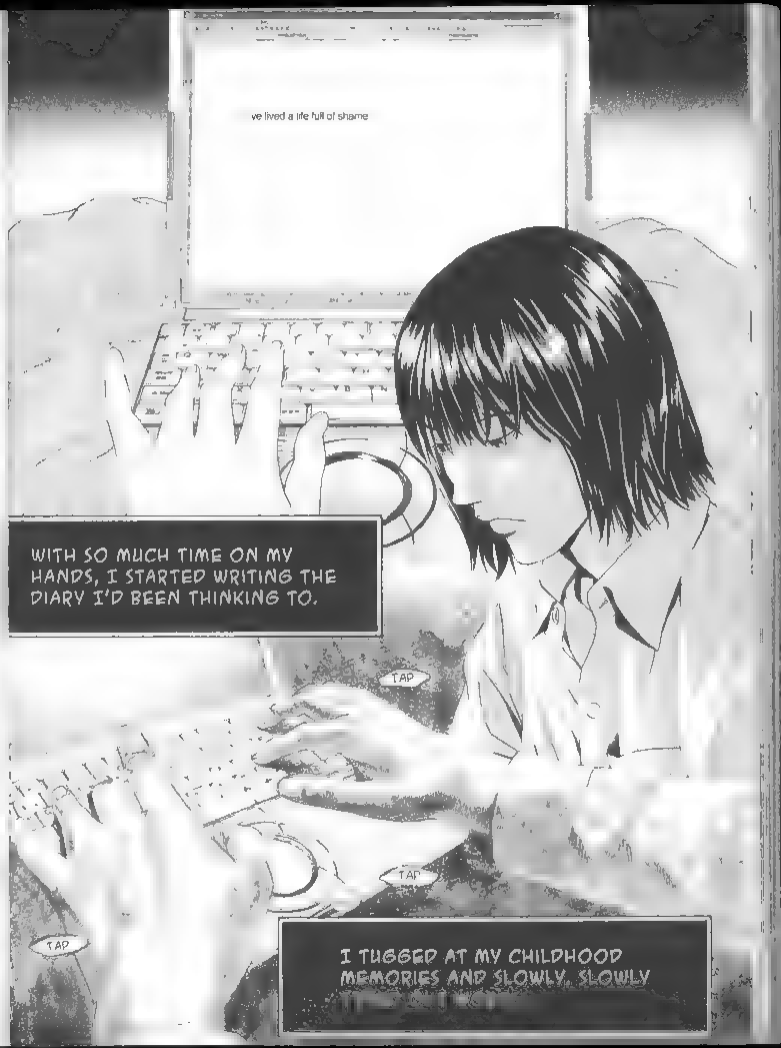
STOMP
STOMP
YOZO, I'M HOME!
TICKLE TICKLE
AH HA HA HA! STOP, SHIORI!
IF I STOP, WILL YOU DRAW ME A PICTURE?
SURE

THIS FROG IS PING.
HE GETS IMPATIENT, SO HE'S FRETTY PING.
AND WHO'S THAT?
THIS IS A GEEKY MOUSE. HE'S CALLED MR. GEEK
NEXT, YOZO, DRAW A MANGA!
WHAT?
AREN'T YOU SETTING THE BAR A LITTLE HIGH?

ZZZ
OH
ZZZ
ZZZ
OH
OH
OH
AH..
I CAN'T KEEP QUIET
OH
OH
AH
AAAH

YOZO...
I LOVE YOU...
I REALLY DO...
..

TAP
shame


ve lived a life full of shame
WITH SO MUCH TIME ON MY HANDS, I STARTED WRITING THE DIARY I'D BEEN THINKING TO.
TAP
TAP
TAP
I TUGGED AT MY CHILDHOOD MEMORIES AND SLOWLY, SLOWLY

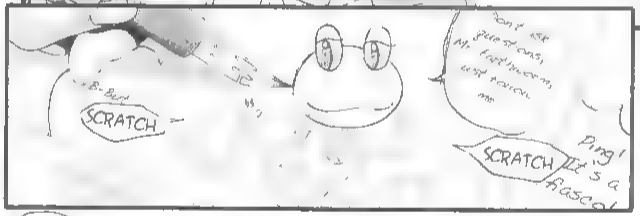
AM I REALLY HAPPY OR NOT?
THAT'S HOW I CAME UP WITH CLOWNING.
EN I WAS STARTLED BY THE
RAWINGS THAT I'D PRODUCED.
CEEDED IN BEING SEEN AS "MISCHIEVOUS."
THAT MOOD OF THE MOVEMENT, RATHER THAN ITS ESSENTIAL PURPOSE, SEEMED TO SUIT ME.
I THOUGHT HE WAS GOOD TO HANG OUT WITH.
I TOOK MY DEVOTION TO THE UGLY AND UNPLEASANT WOMAN FURTHER, AND ACTED HAPPY WHEN SHE BOUGHT ME THINGS...
THE WOMAN DIED.
I, ALONE, WAS SAVED.

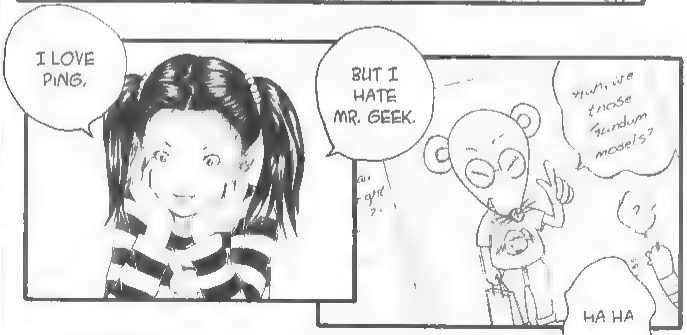
SINCE ARRIVING AT THE HOUSE, I'D EVEN LOST THE WILL TO CLOWN, WALLOWING IN THE CONTEMPT OF FLOUNDER AND THE LITTLE SCAMP...
TAP
TAP
TAP
For the first time, I lived as a kept man.
IN A FEW WEEKS, I HAD ARRIVED AT THIS LIFE.
READING WHAT I'VE WRITTEN DRIVES IT HOME..
I'M SUCH A GOOD-FOR-NOTHING.
ZZZ
AS I WROTE, I FELT
MONEY IS A FACTOR IN ALL NEGATIVES.
I WISH I HAD
MONEY ...
HOW MUCH?
A LOT.
IT'S TRUE THAT "LOVE LASTS AS LONG AS THE MONEY DOES."
DON'T BE ABSURD
THAT'S SO CLICHÉ.
ZZZ
ZZZ

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND, SHIZUKO.
IF YOU DIDN'T HAVE ANY MONEY, I'D PROBABLY BE OUT THE DOOR.
I WANT TO EARN MY OWN LIVING.
I'M MUCH BETTER AT DRAWING THAN HORIKI.
HEHEH, YOU THINK?
I'M NOT KIDDING!
YOU JOKE WITH SUCH A SERIOUS FACE!
AT MANGA ...
AT LEAST AT MANGA, I'M BETTER THAN HORIKI.
I THINK

YOU MAY BE RIGHT!
I'VE THOUGHT YOUR DRAWINGS FOR SHIORI ARE SUPER CUTE!
WILL YOU GIVE IT A TRY?
WHAT?
THE HOUSE I WORK FOR ALSO PUBLISHES THIS
NEW KOROKORO DECEMBER ISSUE

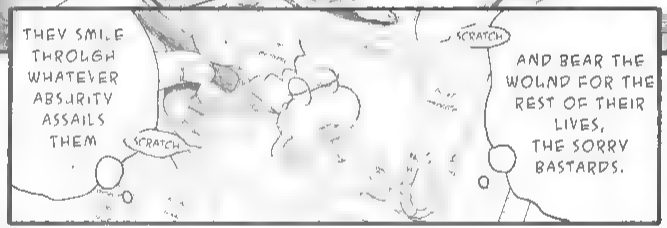
SHIZUKO SAID SHE'D ARRANGE A MEETING WITH THE KIDS' MAGAZINE'S EDITOR-IN-CHIEF.

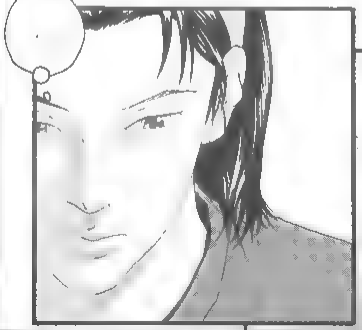




I'VE NEVER DRAWN ANYTHING LIKE THIS BEFORE
BUT I SEEM PRETTY GOOD AT T
HOW ODD
SKRIK
SKRIK
SKRIK
I'm not a flounder
I'm a frog
ONCE I'M GONE, HE LOSES THAT ¥250,000 A MONTH
FLOUNDER I WONDER HOW HE'S DOING?
I DOUBT HE'LL BE ABLE TO PAY THE LOAN ON THAT NEW CAR.
SKRIK
SKRIK
SKRIK

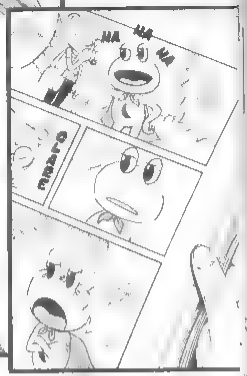
MASATO PROBABLY GOT A BEATING FOR LETTING ME GET AWAY
I'LL SAY BEING A KID'S SUCH A PITIFUL EXISTENCE
SNIFF


THEY SMILE THROUGH WHATEVER ABSURDITY ASSAILS THEM
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
AND BEAR THE WOUND FOR THE REST OF THEIR LIVES, THE SORRY BASTARDS.



THAT'D BE ME.

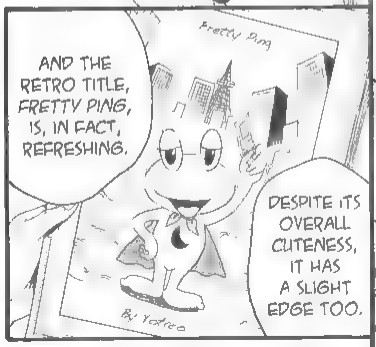
TAISHU BUNGEI CO., LTD.


HA HA HA
GIGGLE

THIS IS THE FIRST MANGA YOU'VE EVER DRAWN?

WOW, IT'S PRETTY GOOD.

CUTE CHARACTERS, TOO.


Pretty Ping
AND THE RETRO TITLE, PRETTY PING, IS, IN FACT, REFRESHING.
DESPITE ITS OVERALL CUTENESS, IT HAS A SLIGHT EDGE TOO.
By Yotaco

SAY ...
YOU'RE QUITE A CYNIC, AREN'T YOU?

PEOPLE WHO DRAW ANIMAL MANGA ARE OFTEN MISANTH-ROPES.
THEY HAVE AN OBLIQUE VIEW OF SOCIETY.
WHAT MATTERS, THOUGH, IS IF IT'S FUN.
I SEE...
WE DON'T HAVE ANY ANIMAL TITLES NOW.
WHY DON'T WE GIVE IT A SHOT?
HUH ?
REALLY ?
HEY, DRAW PING!
YOZO, I HEARD!
ISN'T IT FANTASTIC ?!
YEAH, DUNNO WHY.

IT'S GREAT! CONGRAT-ULATIONS!
IT NEVER HAPPENS THAT EASILY FOR UNSOLICITED NEW WRITERS!
YOU HAVE REAL TALENT, YOZO!
IF FAN RESPONSE IS GOOD, I'LL BE SERIALIZED!
YEAH
GO FOR IT!
IN ORDER TO WORK, YOU NEED TO HAVE AN ADDRESS.
MY YOUNGER BROTHER LIVES NEARBY, HE SAID YOU COULD USE HIS.
BUT, WHY?
AWW, SEE...
YOU DON'T WANT THEM THEM TO FIND OUT YOU'RE LIVING WITH SOME OLD MS.
HEH HEH
Hey, hey!
.....

ZZZ
ZZZ
BUT THAT'S ALL RIGHT
I DON'T MIND.
BECAUSE I LOVE YOU...
ZZZ
ZZZ
SUFFOCATING...
PFEU
PFEU
ZZZ
ZZZ
YOZO ...
ARE YOU ASLEEP ?
ZZZ
ZZZ
I KNOW, YOZO...
THAT YOU DON'T LOVE ME.
THAT YOU DON'T HAVE ANYWHERE TO GO AND THAT'S WHY YOU'RE HERE WITH ME
ZZZ
ZZZ

HERE, THIS WAY
SINCE I'VE BEEN ASSIGNED IT, YOU BET I'LL MAKE FRETTY PING SELL!
LET'S TRY TO GET IT MADE INTO AN ANIME!
FUKAWA MAY BE YOUNG BUT HE'S A GO-GETTER.

TONIGHT WE CELEBRATE THE PILOT'S PUBLICATION! LET'S ALL DRINK,
YOTARO SENSEI!
I WISH I HAD THOUGHT OF A BETTER PEN NAME

CLANG CLING
BEEN A WHILE, MAMA.
OH, WELCOME, MR. FUKAWA.

AND MR. TACHIBAK., I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN A WHILE
AND WHO'S THE YOUNG MAN?

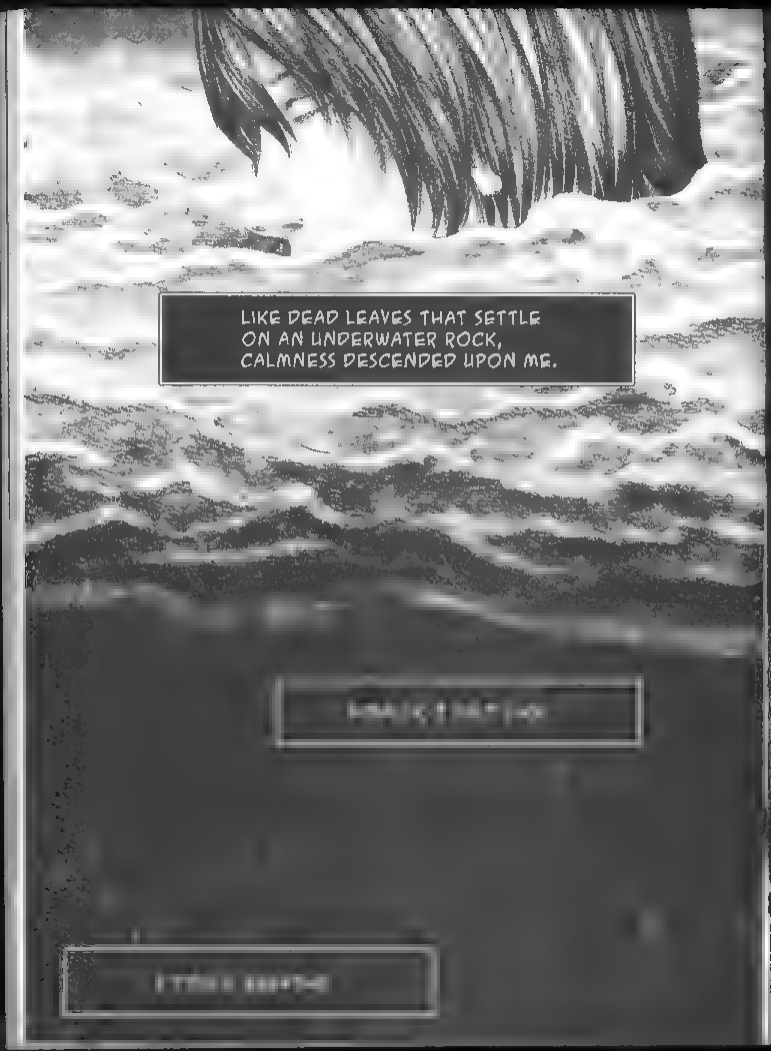
THIS IS YOTARO SENSEI, THE CREATOR OF THIS MANGA.
I DON'T THINK SO...
HE'S THE NEXT TAKASHI YANASE.

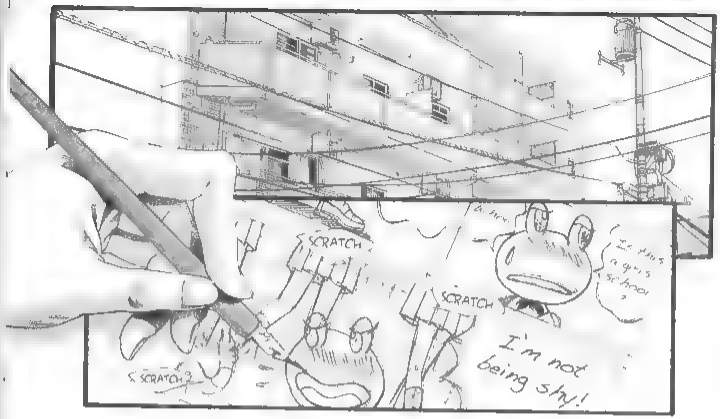
NICE TO MEET YOU,
YOTARO SENSEI.

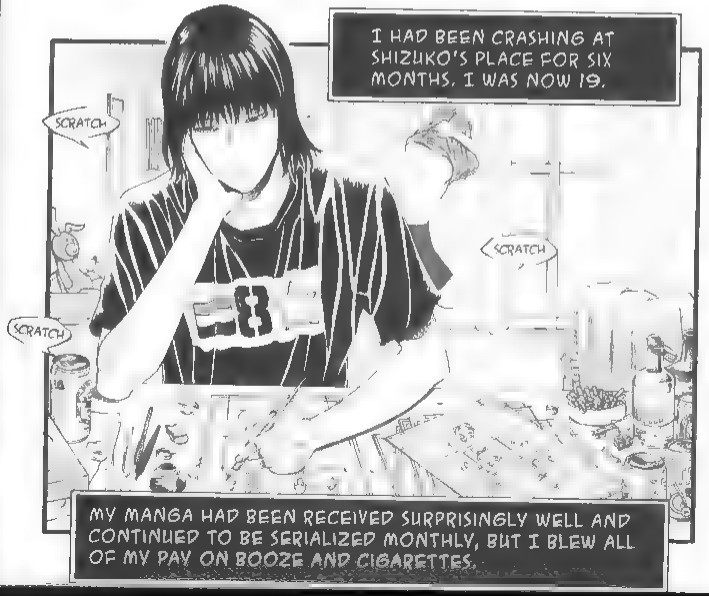
A MIDDLE-AGED PROPRIETRESS, STANDING IN HER DIM BAR UNDER A RAILWAY BRIDGE...

MAYBE THANKS TO THE DIARY I RECALLED THE PAST MORE READILY.

ELEGANTLY FORLORN, SHE VIVIDLY REMINDED ME OF AGEHA'S EXPRESSION, VOICE, AND SCENT.


LIKE DEAD LEAVES THAT SETTLE
ON AN UNDERWATER ROCK,
CALMNESS DESCENDED UPON ME.


SCRATCH
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
I'm not being shy!


I HAD BEEN CRASHING AT SHIZUKO'S PLACE FOR SIX MONTHS. I WAS NOW 19.
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
MY MANGA HAD BEEN RECEIVED SURPRISINGLY WELL AND CONTINUED TO BE SERIALIZED MONTHLY, BUT I BLEW ALL OF MY PAY ON BOOZE AND CIGARETTES.

YOU WORKED ALL NIGHT, YOU MUST BE TIRED.
KEEP AT IT. . . YOU'RE ALMOST THERE!
UH
GOT THIS
GOT THAT
I LEFT A SOBA OMELET IN THE MICRO-WAVE
YEAH
WE'LL HAVE DINNER AROUND EIGHT.
WHY DON'T WE HAVE YOUR FAVORITE TONIGHT, OKONOMI-YAKI?
SORRY
I'LL EAT OUT.
.....
OH?

MOM, I'LL WAIT FOR YOU DOWN-STAIRS.
OKAY
I'LL BE RIGHT THERE.
YOZO ...
KISS ME.

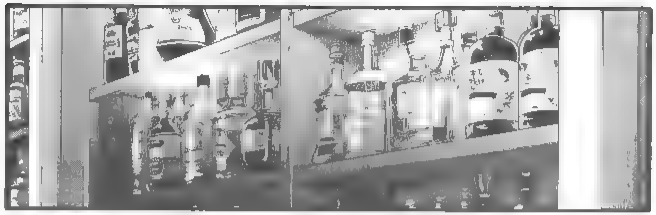
I'M BUSY RIGHT NOW
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
... .
I'M SORRY.
OKAY, I'M OFF.

BAR
マノス
MANOS

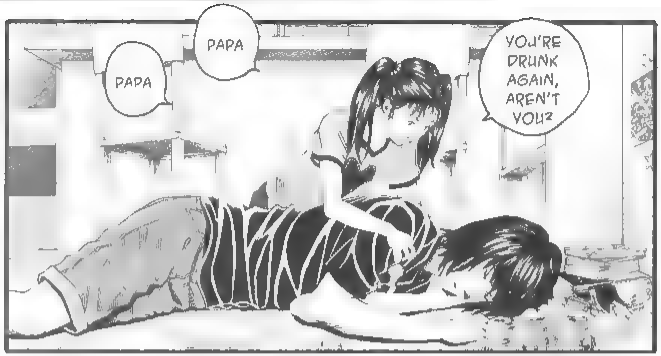
MAMA ..
I .
DON'T LOVE HER ONE BIT

IF I KEEP DO NG THIS
I'M GONNA GET BURNED.

VO...
NOBODY'S CRITICIZING YOU.
ONLY YOU...
CAN BLAME YOURSELF.
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE..
I CAN TALK TO ABOUT THIS STUFF
IT'S OKAY.
TELL ME ALL YOU WANT
TALKING ABOUT IT
MAKES ME FEEL ...
A BIT BETTER.
THIS BAR UNDER THE BRIDGE
IS MY CHURCH.
ZZZ
ZZZ
STUPID BOY...
ZZZ
ZZZ
SWEET, STUPID BOY ....



I'M HOME!


PAPA
PAPA
YOU'RE DRUNK AGAIN, AREN'T YOU?

OH...
WELCOME HOME.

PAPA, ARE YOU SUFFERING ...

PAPA, NOW IS A GOOD TIME TO PRAY
PRAY?

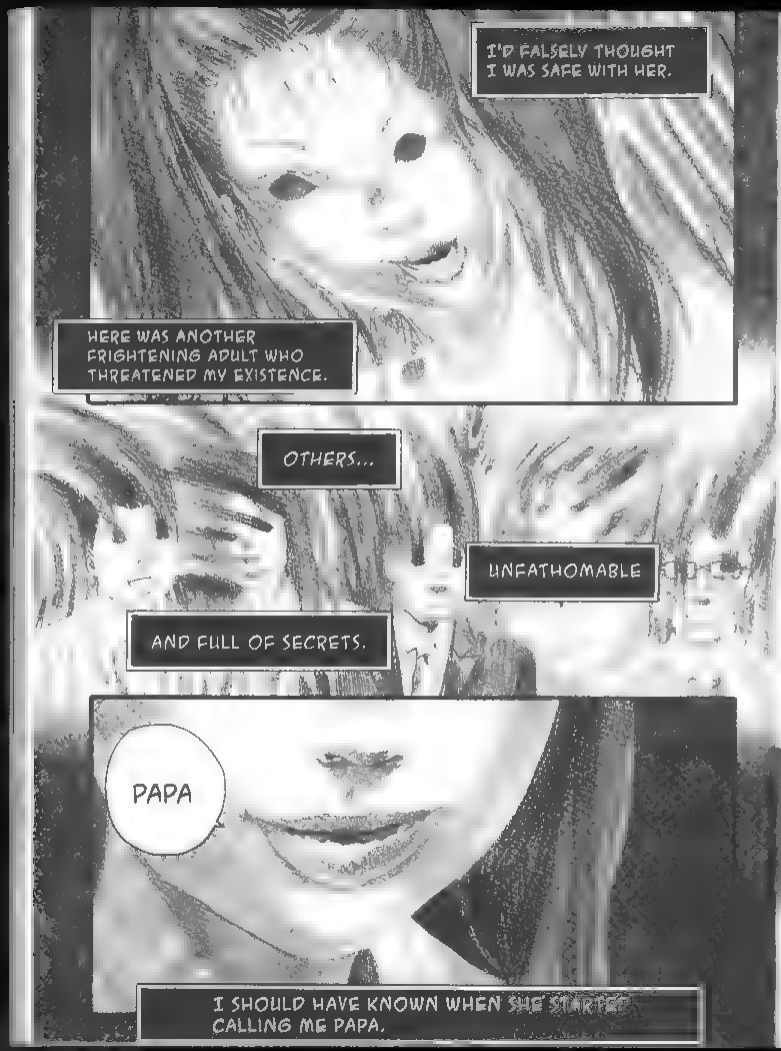
GOD WILL HEAR YOUR PRAYERS, NO MATTER WHAT YOU ASK FOR.

GOD MIGHT LISTEN TO YOUR PRAYERS, SHIORI.
BUT NOT MINE.
WHY NOT?
BECAUSE...
I'VE BEEN FOOLING EVERYONE..
YOU'RE A GOOD PERSON.
EVERYONE SAYS SO
RUSTLE
RUSTLE

ヨータロー先生へ
セッカチピンチャン
ヨータロー先生の優しい人柄が出て
素晴らしい漫画だと思
SHE THINKS I'M
KIND?
A KEPT MAN WHO LIES THROUGH HIS SMILE TO GET A WOMAN TO FEED HIM
IS KIND?
A GOOD PERSON?

IF I
THERE'S NO DOUBT I'LL PAY FOR IT.
I MAY NOT BELIEVE IN DIVINE
BUT I DO BELIEVE IN DIVINE PUNISHMENT.
SHIORI, WHAT ARE YOU ASKING FOR?
UM, WELL
I WISH I HAD
A REAL PAPA.

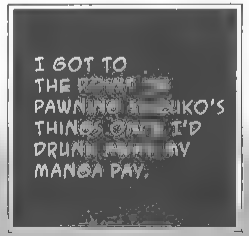
WOULD YOU BE
MY REAL PAPA?
SHUDDER


I'D FALSELY THOUGHT I WAS SAFE WITH HER.
HERE WAS ANOTHER FRIGHTENING ADULT WHO THREATENED MY EXISTENCE.
OTHERS...
UNFATHOMABLE
AND FULL OF SECRETS.
PAPA
I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN WHEN SHE STARTED CALLING ME PAPA.

I'M HOME, PAPA!
WELCOME HOME.
FROM THEN ON, I FORCED A SMILE AROUND SHIORI TOO.
JUST
DUCKING OUT TO BUY C.GA-RETTES.
SLAM

I DRANK MORE AND MORE...

CLATTER
JANGLE
I'D GIVE YOU ₩20,500 FOR ALL OF IT
I'LL TAKE IT.


I GOT TO THE PAWN
MANGA PAY.

5000

I'M HOME
WELCOME HOME.
YOZO
CAN I TALK TO YOU...?

ZZZ
ZZZ

WHAT IS IT?
JUST COME WITH ME
IS THIS ABOUT THE STUFF I PAWNED?
KER-CHAK

HEY THERE, GIGOLO
HO-HORIKI!
HE SOMEHOW FOUND OUT

IT'S 'CAUSE YOU REEK!
I CAN SMELL YOZO'S JIZZ ON YOU, MS. TANAKA!
SNIFF SNIFF
HEE HEE

THAT GUY SHIBUTA CAME LOOKING FOR YOU.
THAT'S WHEN IT HIT ME
I KNEW YOU WERE HERE!

WELL, I'M GLAD YOU SEEM TO BE FINE
BEEN TOO LONG, LET'S GO OUT DRINKING

BAR
バー
NICE BAR.
RUMBLE
EXCEPT FOR THE TRAINS.
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
PART OF THE APPEAL

MAMA, THIS GUY'S HOPELESS!
ALL HE DOES IS GET BY ON HIS SWEET KISSER.

IT'S NOT JUST HIS LOOKS
THE KID GIVES OFF AN AURA THAT WOMEN CAN'T RESIST
YOU CAN STAY HERE WITH ME IF YOU EVER NEED TO.
THANK YOU.
GAAH
OH, MAN! THIS GUY MAKES ME SICK!

I HEAR YOUR MANGA S DOING WELL THESE DAYS TOO.
THAT'S GOOD, YOU CAN'T GET BY ON CHARM ALONE
MM-HMM...
YOUR BASIC SKETCHING SKILLS ARE SHAKY,
SO DON'T GET COCKY.
HA HA
WHY DO I HAVE TO LISTEN TO THIS GUY LECTURE ME?
TONIGHT'S ON YOU.
IT'S THE LEAST YOU COULD DO
WHY, JUST BECAUSE HE INTRODUCED ME TO SHIZUKO?
DOES HE THINK I OWE HIM MY LIFE OR SOMETHING?
ANOTHER ROUND, MAMA!
PEOPLE WON'T LET YOU KEEP GETTING AWAY WITH YOUR WOMANIZING.
HA HA
BY "PEOPLE" DON'T YOU MEAN YOU?
PEOPLE WON'T LEAVE YOU ALONE UNLESS YOU WORK HARD.
UH-HUH
YOU MEAN YOU WON'T.
PEOPLE WILL BURY YOU IF YOU TRY ANOTHER DOUBLE SUICIDE.
YOU'RE MAKING ME SWEAT ...
YOU MEAN YOU'LL BURY ME.
PEOPLE
PEOPLE
PEOPLE

I SEE...
THE "PEOPLE" THAT I'VE VAGUELY FEARED
ARE IN FACT INDIVIDUALS.

SCRATCH
SCRATCH
SCRATCH

My ping is rock-hard!
Ah I owe it!
Geh heh heh
You liked it, eh?
Money
Oy
Hand over some money!
Who the hell are you?!
I don't do girls.
AGGHHH
AH
AH
AH
Yozo
Papa
AAAHH
YOZO
PAPA

YOZO, YOU WERE GROANING IN YOUR SLEEP.
PAPA, YOU'RE CRYING..

CHANGE AND GO TO BED
I ALREADY LAID OUT A FUTON

I HAD A BAD DREAM.
I'M GOING OUT FOR A DRINK
HAVEN'T YOU HAD ENOUGH TONIGHT?

MONEY
GIVE ME MONEY!

IT'S RIGHT BEFORE PAYDAY...
I CAN ONLY GIVE YOU ¥5,000

YOU...
YOU'D DO WHATEVER I SAY, WOULDN'T YOU.

UNDRESS!
WHAT?

I'M GOING TO DRAW YOU SO...
UNDRESS!

B-BUT
SHIORI'S HERE

YOU LOVE ME, DON'T YOU?
OR WAS THAT JUST A LIE?

SHIORI
TURN THE OTHER WAY.
CLENCH

DASH
YOZO, WAIT!
YOU'RE BARE-FOOT!
YOZO!
GASP
PANT
MY PANTIES TOO?
NO
DON'T

PAPA
PUT SOME SHOES ON!
YOZO!
PUCK

MAMA?
WHY DOES PAPA GET DRUNK?
PAPA IS...
TOO GOOD OF A PERSON.

SO GOOD PEOPLE GET DRUNK?
THAT'S RIGHT.

LOOK, MAMA, A FROGGIE!
COME WE'LL LOOK FOR YOZO
BUT LOOK, HE LOOKS LIKE PING!

THOSE ARE
HAPPY PEOPLE...

A FOOL L KE ME INTRUDES IN THEIR LIVES
AND EVENTLALLY WRECKS EVERYTHING.

EEK!

HE SURE SEE ME
LET'S GO
GOODBYE...

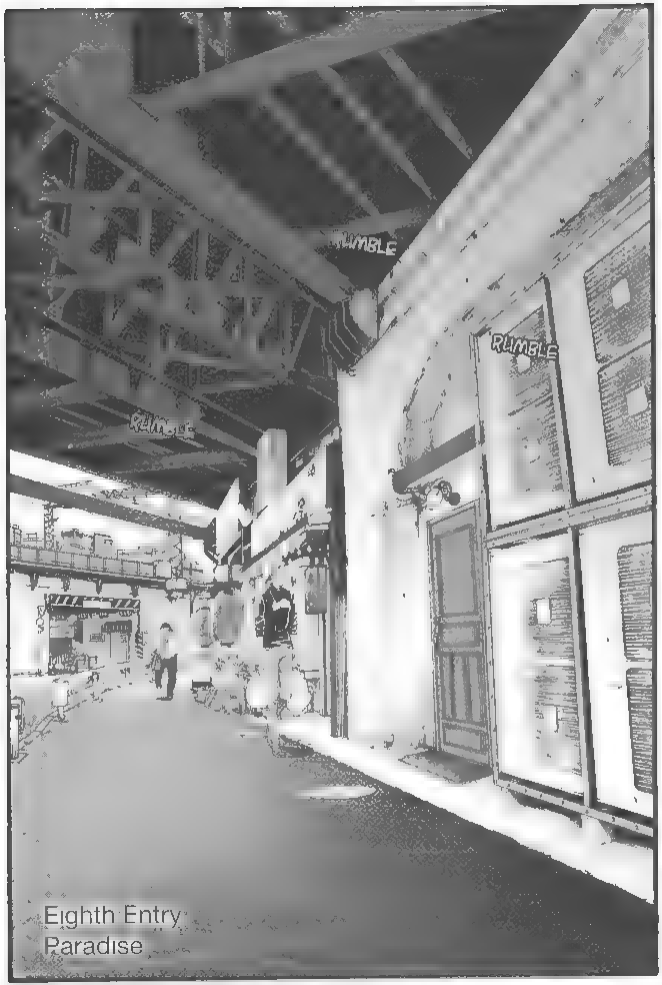
CLANG CLANG
I LEFT HER.
(CLINK)
IF...
IF
GOD
EXISTS ..
AND IF HE'D LISTEN TO THE PRAYER OF SCUM LIKE ME...
JUST THIS ONCE...
IN MY LIFE... I PRAY THIS—

MAY THOSE TWO FIND HAPPINESS
SOME MODEST
HAPPI-NESS
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE

JUST DO THE SAME THING TOMORROW, FOLLOWING THE PRECEDENT OF YESTERDAY. AS LONG AS WILD SURGES OF HAPPINESS ARE AVOIDED, NEITHER WILL DEPTHS OF SORROW VISIT. A TOAD JUST CREEPS AROUND THE STONE BLOCKING ITS WAY.

WHEN I DISCOVERED THIS VERSE BY GUY-CHARLES CROS, TRANSLATED BY BIN UEDA, ALL ALONE I BLUSHED AS THOUGH MY FACE WERE AFLAME.

A TOAD.
(THAT IS ME.
WHY EVEN WONDER IF PEOPLE WILL FORGIVE ME? BURYING ME OR NOT ISN'T THE ISSUE. I AM A BASE CREATURE, LOWER THAN A DOG OR A CAT. A TOAD. CREEPING ALONG ON MY WAY.)



Eighth Entry
Paradise

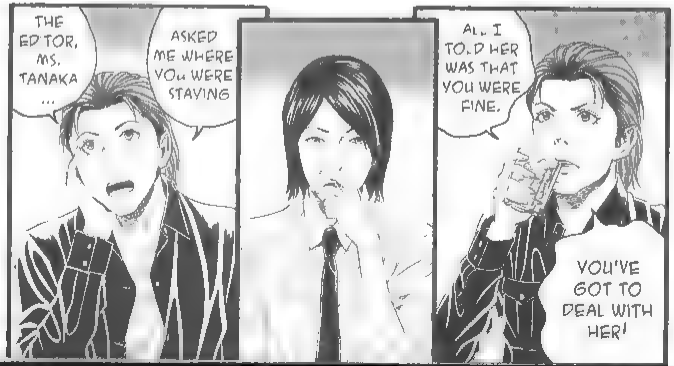
CLICK
CLANG CLING
UPSIE.
BAR
SU-S...
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
ZZZ
ZZZ
RUMBLE
RUMBLE

CHOP!
CHOP
LNH...
GOOD MORNING
MAMA
ISN'T TODAY WHEN YOU HAND IN YOUR MANU-SCRIPT?
DID YOU FINISH IT?
WEL.
I DID BUT IT SUCKS AS USUAL.

I FORGOT TO GET CARROTS.
YO, COULD YOU RUN OUT TO GET THEM FOR ME?
SURE
CLICK
THE SETTING SUN LOOKS SO BRIGHT ...
THE FOUR-MAT KITCHEN OF BAR MANOS WAS MY NEW ABODE.

CLANG CLANG
WELCOME
OH
WHAT THE-
YOTARO SENSEI?!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
UH-HM...
FOR A REASON HE'S LIVING AND WORKING HERE FOR ME.
WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME?
FROM NEXT MONTH I'LL COME HERE TO PICK UP YOUR MANUSCRIPT.
HA HA
IT'S A BIT AWKWARD.
SOMETIMES I WORKED AS BARTENDER AT MANOS
SOMETIMES I WAS LIKE A CUSTOMER
SOMETIMES I ACTED LIKE THE HUSBAND
SOMETIMES I WAS LIKE AN ERRAND BOY AND SOMETIMES LIKE FAMILY.
THOUGH IT MUST HAVE SEEMED LIKE A CURIOUS EXISTENCE...
THE REGULARS TOOK TO ME AND WERE TERRIBLY KIND, BUYING ME DRINKS.

CLANG CLANG
HEY, MR. LADYK..LER.
WELCOME BACK, MASAO.
THAT'S SOME NICKNAME FOR ME.
IT'S FITTING, ISN'T T2


THE ED TOR, MS. TANAKA ...
ASKED ME WHERE YOu WERE STAYING
AL. I TO. D HER WAS THAT YOu WERE FINE.
YOU'VE GOT TO DEAL WITH HER!

ONE OF THESE DAYS
I'LL HAVE A TALK WITH HER.

A GUY WHO CUTS AND RUNS IS THE WORST.
SHE TOOK YOU IN FOR MORE THAN SIX MONTHS— AT LEAST BREAK UP PROPERLY!

I GLESS.
IT'S A PRETTY GOOD ARGUMENT BUT. .
IT P.SSES ME OFF TO HEAR IT FROM HORIKI.

BY THE WAY, YOZO...
WHAT'S YOUR DEAL WITH MAMA?
MAMA .
ACCEPTS ME COMPLETELY AS I AM.

SOUNDS SERIOUS ...
DOES THAT MEAN YOUR DESIRES TOO?
EVERY-THING.
MAMA IS LIKE ST. MARY TO ME.

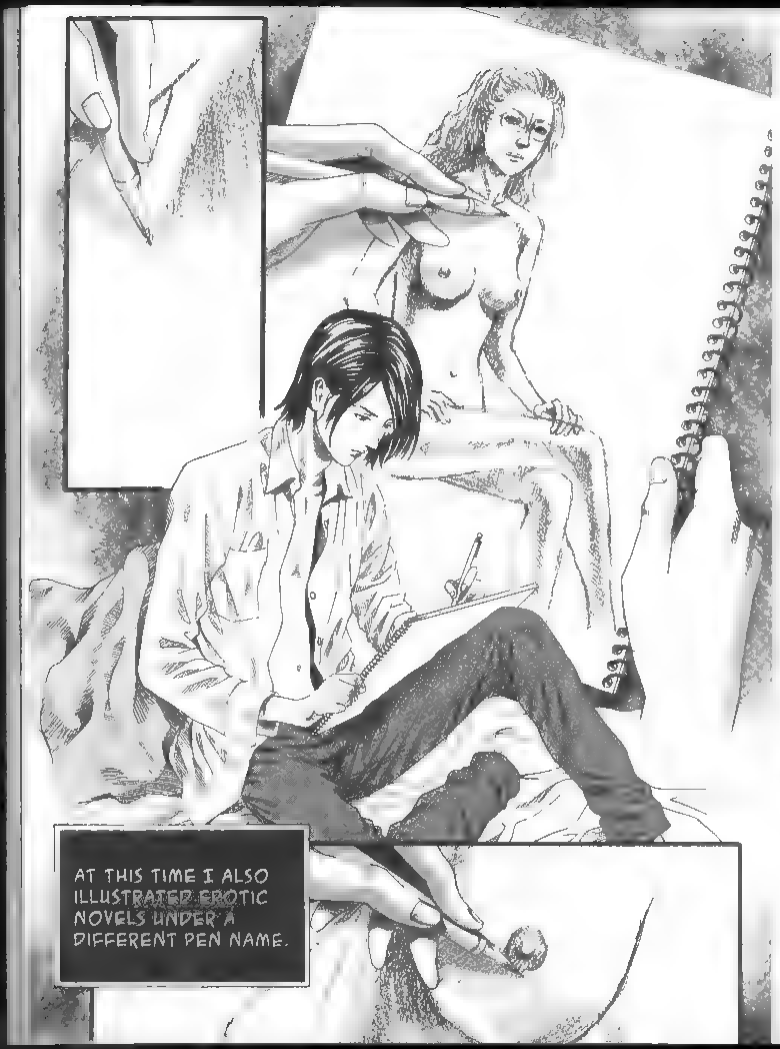
YOU CAN CALL ME MARY BUT I'M NO VIRGIN
I DIDN'T THINK SO!
HA HA

I STILL DON'T GET IT, BUT FINE!

AT ANY RATE
YOU KNOW WHAT YOU ARE?
THE WORST MAN I'VE EVER MET
FOR REAL
THAT'S HARSH!

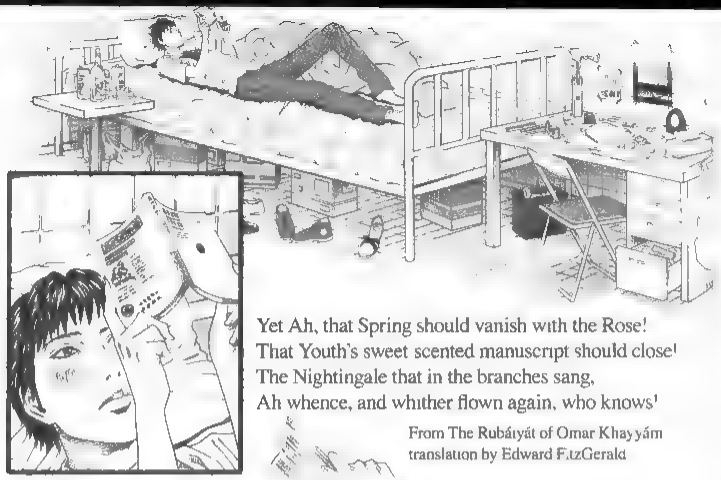
WHY IS IT THAT WOMEN ALWAYS COME TO YOUR RESCUE?
MY DISGUST FOR YOU HAS COME FULL CIRCLE ...
NOW I RESPECT YOU!
GLINK

HORIKI AND I
WERE FRIENDS DESPITE OUR MUTUAL SCORN.


AT THIS TIME I ALSO ILLUSTRATED EROTIC NOVELS UNDER A DIFFERENT PEN NAME.

SHOW ME.
YOU'RE SO KIND, YO.
THIS DRAWING IS TRIPE ...

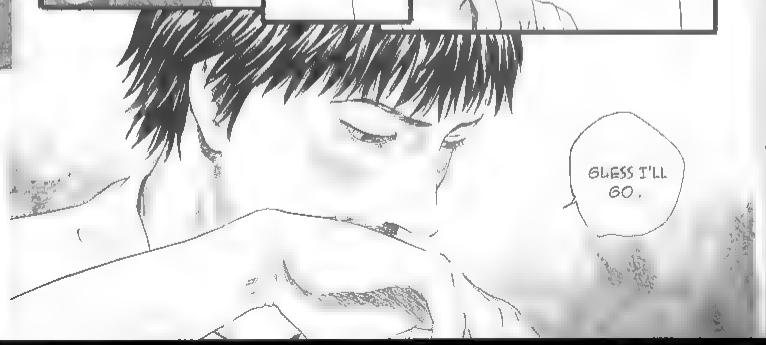
TRIPE?
LOOK CLOSELY...
DON'T BE AFRAID TO
DRAW THE WRINKLES.
THESE ARE MY GROWTH RINGS.
EACH STANDS FOR A LOVE
AND A PARTING.
REDO THIS.
YES...
SHE'S TOUGHER THAN THE TEACHERS AT ART PREP SCHOOL
A YEAR PASSED...
AND I TURNED 20.



Yet Ah, that Spring should vanish with the Rose!
That Youth's sweet scented manuscript should close!
The Nightingale that in the branches sang,
Ah whence, and whither flown again, who knows!

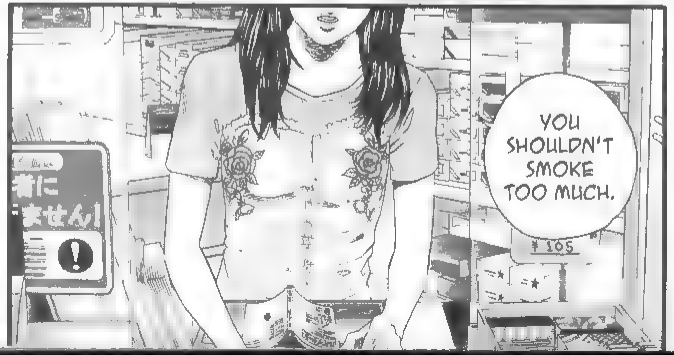
From The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám
translation by Edward FitzGerald

GULP
GULP
GULP
SURROUNDED BY KIND PEOPLE FOR A YEAR, I WAS STARTING TO THINK
MAYBE THE WORLD ISN'T SUCH A SCARY PLACE AFTER ALL.



STAGGER
THERE WAS ANOTHER REASON I FELT SO.

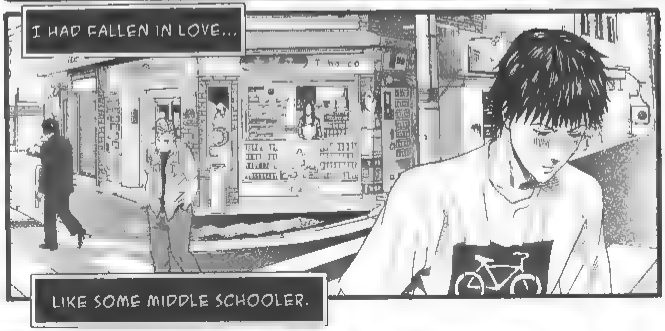
Tobacco
STAGGER
MARL-BORO
HERE YOU ARE.


YOU SHOULDN'T SMOKE TOO MUCH.

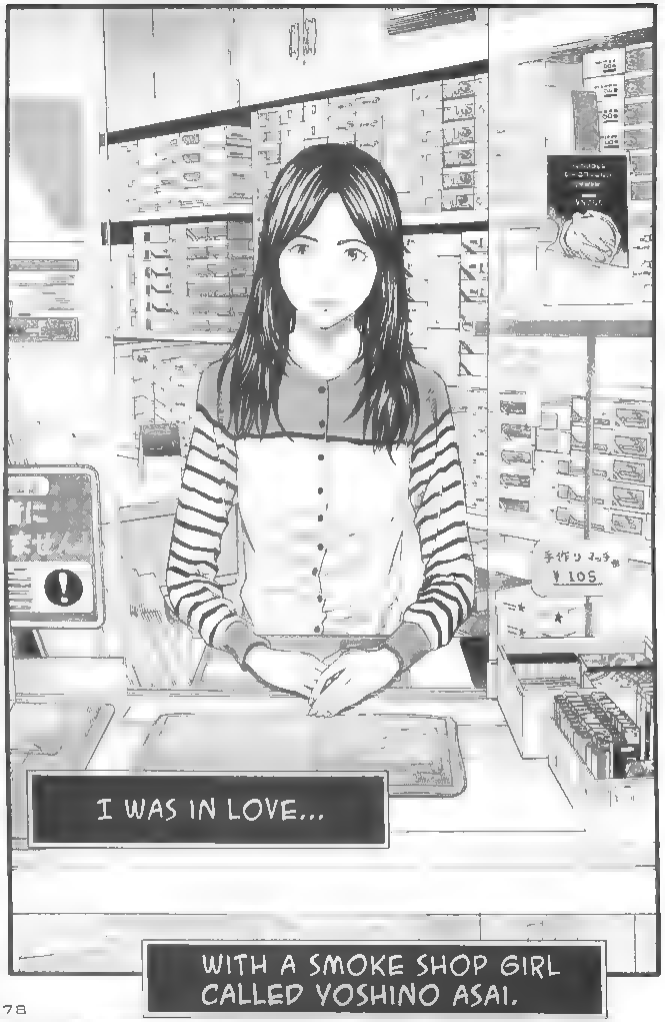
YOU'VE BEEN DRINKING AGAIN
ALCOHOL IS MY LIFE-BLOOD.
YOU SAY THAT WHEN YOU WORK FOR A SMOKE SHOP?
Tobacco

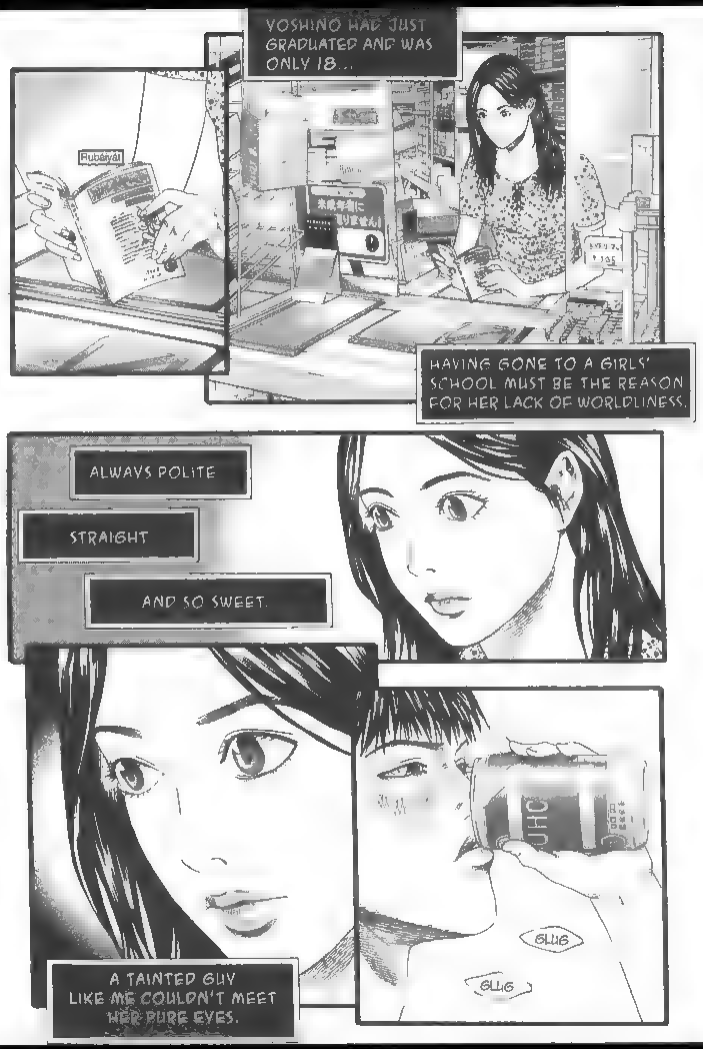
TOO MUCH IS NOT GOOD FOR YOUR HEALTH.
SH-
SHUT UP!

We Card
Handmade Matchbooks
¥ 105
¥ 05


I HAD FALLEN IN LOVE...
LIKE SOME MIDDLE SCHOOLER.

MARLBORO
...I UTTER, DRUNK,
AND HER LIPS, PINK AS A ROSEBUD, UNFAILINGLY SAY...
YOU SHOULDN'T SMOKE TOO MUCH
DRUNK AS I AM, I RETORT...
WHAT IS THIS?
GIMME A BREAK!
YOU WORK FOR A SMOKE SHOP.
THIS IS NEW...


I WAS IN LOVE...
WITH A SMOKE SHOP GIRL CALLED YOSHINO ASAI.


YOSHINO HAD JUST GRADUATED AND WAS ONLY 18...
Puberty!!
HAVING GONE TO A GIRLS' SCHOOL MUST BE THE REASON FOR HER LACK OF WORLDLINESS.
ALWAYS POLITE
STRAIGHT
AND SO SWEET.
A TAINTED GUY LIKE ME COULDN'T MEET HER PURE EYES.
GLUG
GLUG

Tobacco
STAGGER
Tobacco
MARL-
BORO
YOU SHOULDN'T SMOKE TOO MUCH.
ARE YOU DRUNK AGAIN?
OH YEAH, YOSHI?
AND YOUR FOREHEAD IS BLINDING ME TODAY.
OH...
YOU'RE TEASING ME...
Tobacco
Tobacco
Tobacco
TEASING A GIRL I'M IN LOVE WITH
WHAT AM I, A MIDDLE SCHOOLER?
If but the Mist and Love-blinding Band,
Are in
and,
Attack
dise
Were
's Hand.
YEAH, MAN!
YOU'VE GOT A WAY WITH WORDS, OMAR!

I'M EVEN READING THE SAME BOOK OF POETRY AS SHE IS...
I MUST BE OUT OF MY MIND.
AHH...
WHAT THE HELL AM I GONNA DO...

UNTIL NOW, ALL OF MY RELATIONSHIPS STARTED WITH SEX AND WENT ON FROM THERE
I HAVE NO IDEA HOW TO TAKE A STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH.

WOULD SHE BE A VIRGIN?
SHE'S GOTTA BE.
HOW THE HELL AM I SUPPOSED TO ACT AROUND A VIRGIN?
IF I SAY THE WRONG THING, SHE'LL SEE HOW DISGUSTING I AM...
NO ...
SHE PROBABLY ALREADY DOES.

STAGGER
STAGGER
WELCOME

MARL-BORO
HAVE YOU BEEN DRINKING MORE THESE DAYS?
THAT WON'T DO
YOU'RE DRUNK FROM DAY TIME.
AND YOU SMOKE TOO MUCH.
THIS IS YOUR THIRD PACK TODAY
HUH?! WHAT IS THIS?!

WHY DO YOU CARE?! YOU WORK FOR A SMOKE SHOP.
WHY?
IT'S BAD FOR YOUR HEALTH
HOW CAN YOU SELL SOMETHING THAT'S UNHEALTHY?
YOU'RE RIGHT..
BUT THREE PACKS...
IF I SMOKE THREE
I GET TO COME HERE THREE TIMES
WHA-

THAT... WASN'T GOOD
THAT WASN'T GOOD JUST NOW!
I DEFINITELY DRANK TOO MUCH TODAY!
SEE, SHE'S FALLEN SILENT ...
SHE THINKS I'M A CREEP!
I'VE TOTALLY CREEPED HER OUT !!
IN THAT CASE...
IN THAT CASE
COME BUY CHOCOLATES INSTEAD.
WHAT?

THESE COST ONLY ¥20 EACH.
FOR THE PRICE OF A PACK OF CIGARETTES, YOU COULD COME HERE 15 TIMES...
DAMN!
DAMMIT!
SO CUTE!
SO DAMN CUTE!
SHIT...!!
I KNOW YOU TOO WELL, YO.
YOU'RE IN LOVE WITH SOMEONE, AREN'T YOU?
NAH...
HEH HEH
CHK
CHK
CHK

Yes, Rhoda
So, there's food you don't like?
Yes! There is!
Hmmmh, hmmm
No - you're not the one to ask!
Yes! Yes! Yes!
WITH A LOVE INTEREST
PING REALLY COMES TO LIFE!
HA HA
I GUESS SO.
I MUST HAVE ENJOYED ACTING LIKE A SCHOOLBOY...

IN WINTER, A YEAR AND A HALF SINCE I CAME HERE
Tobacco
STAGGER
OUR RELATIONSHIP ABRUPTLY CHANGED.
KA-CHINK
TIROL CHOCO-LATE..
AND MARL-BORO.
.....
YOU'RE REALLY DRUNK AGAIN.
STAGGER
Tobacco
LOOK OUT— WATCH WHERE YOU'RE GOING!

友愛社会実現を！
BONK
Towards a Fraternal Society! Your livelihood comes first! Democratic Party
民主党
OUCH

A-ARE YOU OKAY?!
I'M FINE, I'M FINE.
UH-OH
YOU'RE BLEEDING!

I'LL TAKE CARE OF IT, COME THIS WAY.
WOW... THAT'S A LOT OF BLOOD.
COME INSIDE.
ライト
UH... OKAY.

YOU'VE GOT A CUT
OH, THAT MUST HURT..
9

DOES IT STING?
NO..
I'M TOO DRUNK TO FEEL ANY PAIN,
HEH HEH

WHY DON'T YOU
GIVE UP DRINKING AFTER THIS?
YEAH..
I SHOULD...
I WILL
STARTING TOMORROW, I WON'T TAKE ANOTHER SIP.

REALLY?
UH-HUH
IF I QUIT DRINKING
WOULD YOU GO OUT WITH ME, YOSHI?
HA HA HA..
YOU ARE DRUNK.
BUT YES, I WOULD.
HEY!
DID YOU JUST SAY YES?
YOU THINK I'M KIDDING?!
BLOODY HELL, PINKY SWEAR ON IT!
YES.

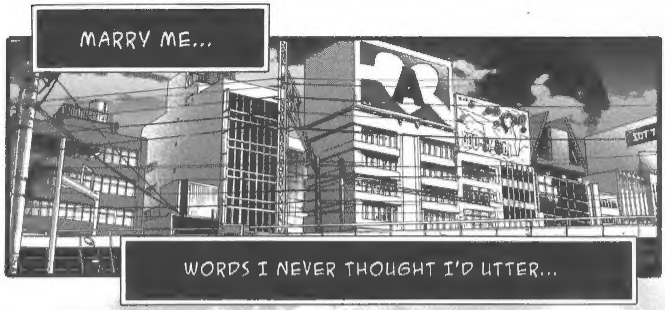
THOUGH I PROMISED YESTERDAY ..
HOW COULD IT NOT HAVE BEEN A LIE?
I MEAN, IT'S ME WE'RE TALKING ABOUT.
STAGGER
YOSHI
I DRANK AGAIN...
HEH
WHAT ?
I DRANK AGAIN...
SORRY.
HA HA
YOU'RE JUST PRETENDING TO BE DRUNK!
NO...
I REALLY AM DRUNK.
YOU'RE A GOOD ACTOR.
ISN'T MY FACE RED?
I TOLD YOU, I'M DRUNK.
YOU'RE LYING.
LYING.

THE SUNSET..
THAT'S WHY YOUR FACE LOOKS RED.
YOU PROM SED YESTERDAY
WE EVEN DID A P.NKY SWEAR.
THERE'S NO WAY YOU'D DRINK...
YOU'RE LYING...

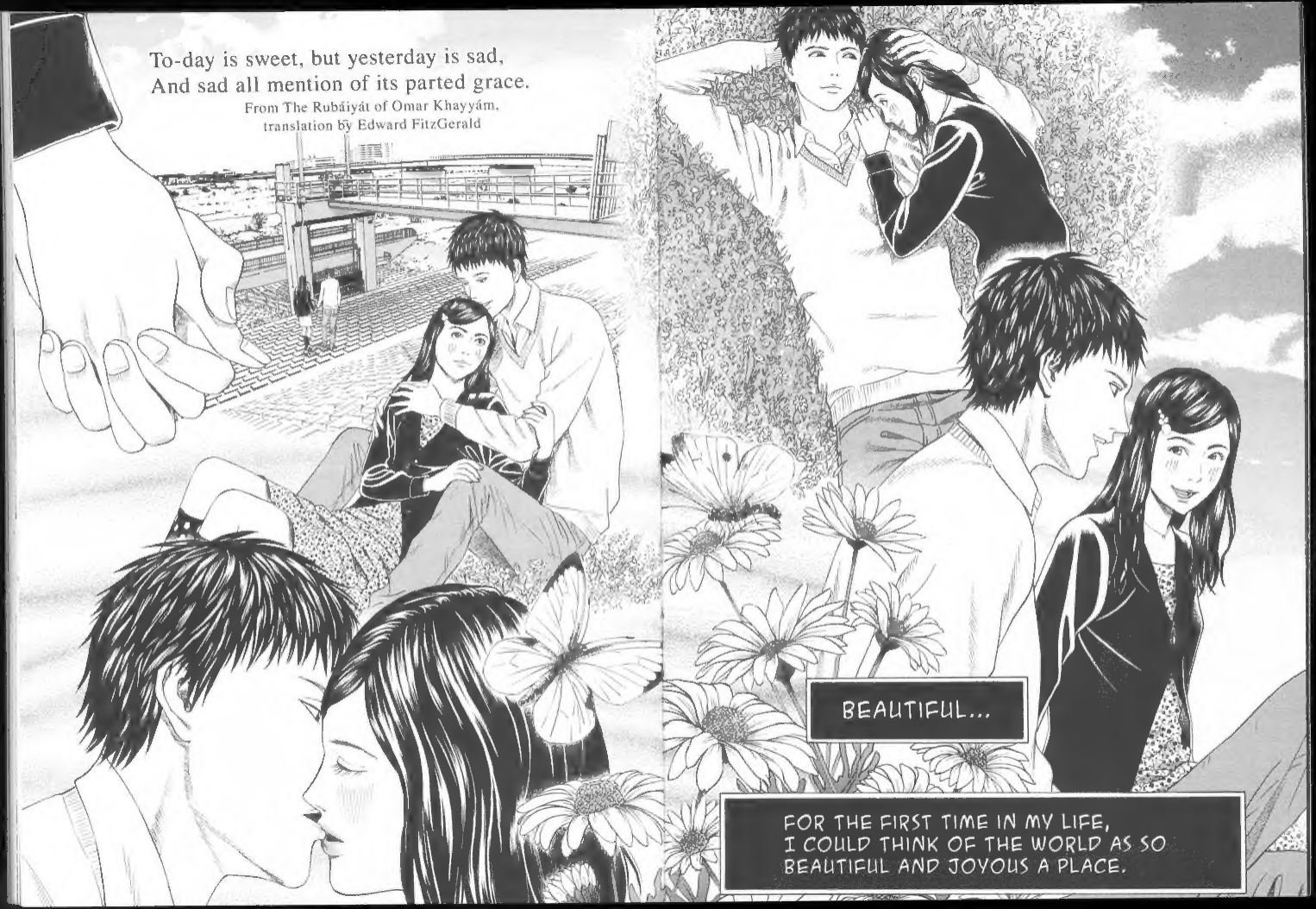
THAT WAS WHEN...
I LEARNED YOSHINO LOVED ME TOO.
YOSH
I'M IN LOVE WITH YOU..
I..
I.. UM...

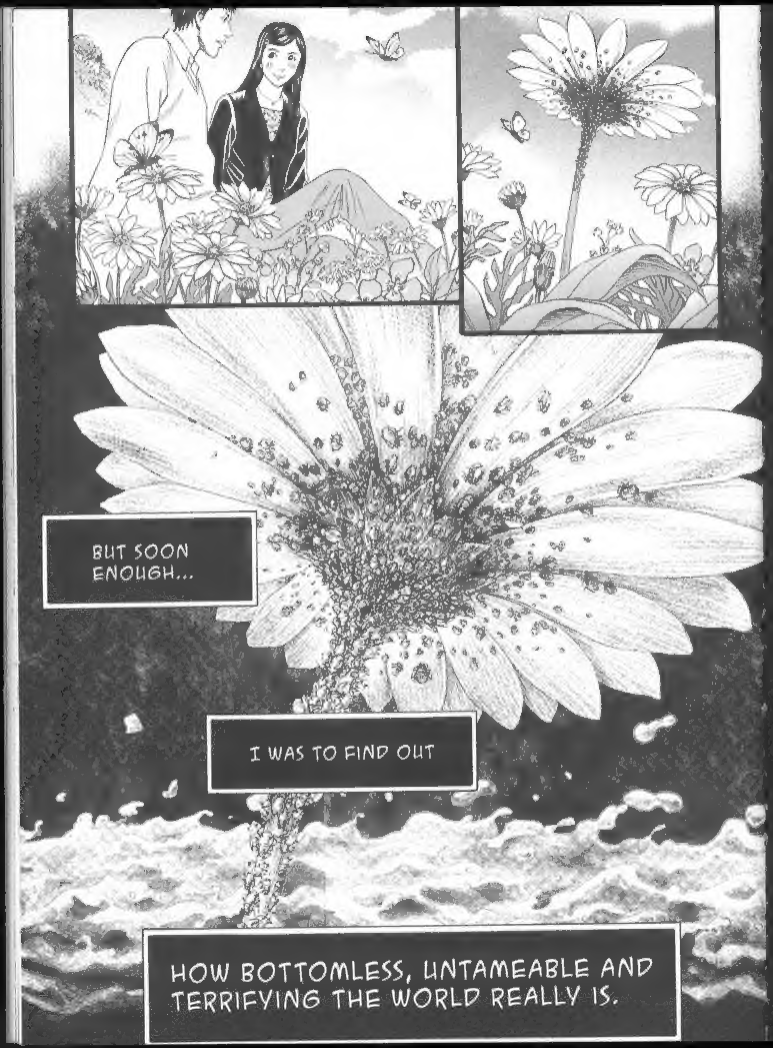
WOULD YOU
BE MY G.RL2
LH..
UM...
I
I'VE NEVER GONE OUT
IT SCARES ME A LITTLE, BUT...
BUT
IT'S ALL RIGHT2
NOD..

LH, SORRY
I TAKE IT BACK.
WHAT2
LISTEN ..
UH.
YOSH
WILL YOU MARRY ME2



Sweet is the breath of Spring to rose's face,
And thy sweet face adds charm to this fair place;


To-day is sweet, but yesterday is sad,
And sad all mention of its parted grace.
From The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám,
translation by Edward FitzGerald
BEAUTIFUL...
FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE,
I COULD THINK OF THE WORLD AS SO
BEAUTIFUL AND JOYOUS A PLACE.


BUT SOON ENOUGH...
I WAS TO FIND OUT
HOW BOTTOMLESS, UNTAMEABLE AND TERRIFYING THE WORLD REALLY IS.

I'D NEVER SLEPT WITH
A VIRGIN, YOUNGER THAN ME.
I RESOLVED TO GET MARRIED;
TO ACCEPT WHATEVER DEPTHS
OF SORROW MIGHT FOLLOW ME,
IF JUST ONCE IN MY LIFE I'D
KNOW A WILD SURGE OF HAPPINESS;
TO BELIEVE THAT VIRGINAL BEAUTY,
WHICH I'D DISMISSED AS
A SENTIMENTAL ILLUSION OF
FOOLISH POETS, DOES EXIST;
TO GO SEE THE AOBA WATERFALL
AS A COUPLE COME SPRING
ON A BICYCLE TRIP—
RESOLVED THEN AND THERE
AND DID NOT HESITATE
TO STEAL THAT FLOWER
"IN ONE SHOT."

自分は今まで、
自分よりも若い處女と寢た事がない。
結婚しよう、どんな大きな悲哀(かなしみ)が
そのために後からやつて來てもよい、
荒つぽいほどの大きな歡樂(よろこび)を、
生涯にいちどでいい、
處女性の美しさとは、
それは馬鹿な詩人の甘い感傷の幻に過ぎぬ
と思つてゐたけれども、
やはりこの世の中に生きて在るものだ、
結婚して春になつたら
二人で自轉車で青葉の瀧を見に行かう、と、
その場で決意し、所謂「一本勝負」で、
その花を盜むのに
ためらふ事をしませんでした。

(FROM PAGE 95 OF THE SHINCHO BUNKO EDITION OF *NO LONGER HUMAN*)